

The background of the cover is a dark blue field filled with numerous bright, glowing blue light trails. These trails are of varying lengths and thicknesses, some appearing as sharp, straight lines while others are more diffuse and wispy. They seem to originate from different points and converge towards the center, creating a sense of dynamic movement and depth, reminiscent of long-exposure photography of light or perhaps a microscopic view of certain biological structures.

# Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium

*Edited by*  
**Floris Bernard and Kristoffel Demoen**





POETRY AND ITS CONTEXTS IN  
ELEVENTH-CENTURY BYZANTIUM

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*Edited by*

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When the project was halfway, the main participants organized a round-table conference at the Royal Academy for Dutch Language and Literature (KANTL) in Ghent, on 12 and 13 December 2008, under the title ‘Giving a Small Taste. Poetry and its Contexts in 11th-century Byzantium’. Much to our pleasure and gratitude, most of the leading scholars of the field agreed to participate, along with younger colleagues. The meeting was both stimulating and agreeable, and constituted a landmark in our research project. On behalf of all the participants, we would like to thank the KANTL for hosting the conference and the students and junior colleagues who volunteered to assist with the practicalities that go with such an event.

The chapters in this book are revised versions of most of the papers given at the conference; a couple of contributions depart from the oral versions to such a degree that they are really new articles. As a whole, we can say that this volume represents a fairly representative view of the current state of the research on eleventh-century Byzantine poetry.

As editors of the volume, we would like to thank all the contributors for their loyal cooperation. Zoë Ghyselincx and Aagje Monballieu assisted us with the technical parts of the copy editing, Renaat Meesters and Raf Praet with the production of the index. Judith Ryder, Peter Newey and the copy-editor of Ashgate helped us with revision of the English style of several texts. We are deeply grateful for the care and competence they brought to their task.

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Kristoffel Demoen and Floris Bernard,  
Ghent, Belgium

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# List of Abbreviations

AB	Analecta Bollandiana
AP	Anthologia Palatina
ArtBul	Art Bulletin
BB	Byzantinobulgarica
BBG	Bolletino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata
BF	Byzantinische Forschungen
BMGS	Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
BNV	Byzantina et Neograeca Vindobonensia
BollClass	Bollettino dei Classici
BT	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
Byz	Byzantion
ByzSl	Byzantinoslavica
ByzVind	Byzantina Vindobonensia
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CIG	Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum
DchAE	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας
DNP	Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider (eds), Der neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler, 1996–2007)
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
EEBS	Ἑπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν
GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies
K	Eduard Kurtz (ed.), Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios (Leipzig: A. Neumann, 1903)
L	Paul de Lagarde (ed.), Iohannis Euchaitorum Metropolitae quae in codice Vaticano Graeco 676 supersunt (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1882; repr. Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1979)
JÖB	Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
LBG	Erich Trapp (ed.), Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität, besonders des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts (Vienna, 1994–)
LSJ	Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 9th ed., 1940, with New Supplement added 1996)
MCr	Museum Criticum
MG	Medioevo Greco
NE	Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων

OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica
ODB	Kazhdan, Alexander P. (ed.), <i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> (3 vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)
PG	Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca</i> (Paris, 1857–1868)
RbK	Klaus Wessel (ed.), <i>Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst</i> (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1966–)
RE	August Pauly, Georg Wissowa, Wilhelm Kroll, Kurt Witte, Karl Mittelhaus, and Konrat Ziegler (eds), <i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft: neue Bearbeitung</i> (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1894–1980)
REB	Revue des Etudes Byzantines
REG	Revue des Etudes Grecques
RPh	Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes
RSBN	Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SicGymn	Siculorum Gymnasium
SIFC	Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica
TM	Travaux et Mémoires
Vassis	Ioannis Vassis, <i>Initia Carminum Byzantinorum. Supplementa Byzantina, Texte und Forschungen 8.</i> (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2005)
VV	Vizantiiski Vremennik
W	Leendert Gerrit Westerink (ed.), <i>Michael Psellus. Poemata</i> (Stuttgart/Leipzig: Teubner, 1992)
WByzSt	Wiener Byzantinistische Studien
WJA	Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft
WS	Wiener Studien

# PART I

## Introduction

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# Chapter 1

## Giving a Small Taste

Floris Bernard and Kristoffel Demoen

In the introductory poem to his collected works, Maupous states that he offers his readers a ‘small taste of an abundant bouquet.’<sup>1</sup> With this he makes clear that his collection is only a selection from the many works he has written. The notion of a ‘small taste’ (in the sense of ‘fore-glimpse’) conveys the main point of the poem and indeed one of the thematic threads of the whole collection: instead of ambitious grandiloquence, Maupous contents himself with a life stance that is soft-spoken, without grand ambitions.

The conjunction of ‘small’ with ‘taste’ reoccurs in Psellos’ poem on medicine,<sup>2</sup> following some verses that must be among the most repulsive in Byzantine literature, expounding the odours and colours of urine. It is the intention of the present poem, Psellos says, to ‘give a small taste’ for the art of medicine. The notion of ‘small taste’ (here in the sense of ‘appetite’) is explicitly connected with the use of verse: poetry can serve as an appetizer to digest less attractive information.

We considered the tag ‘giving a small taste’ appropriate for this volume on eleventh-century poetry. Research into these texts is at the present moment still in a rudimentary phase. Therefore, this volume offers a modest, but multifaceted, experience of this period’s poetry. At the same time, it can whet the appetite, by laying bare the blind spots and whatever features require further analysis.

The relative lack of interest in eleventh-century poetry is perhaps partly due to its very particular nature which we have for a long time misunderstood. This poetry does not fit so neatly into the tradition of ancient poetry as some epigrammatic ninth- and tenth-century poetry does. It is not ridden with quotations from ancient poetry,<sup>3</sup> and it does not accord well with the genre system inherited from antiquity. As a result, scholars considering this poetry as the tail end of ancient tradition were prone to reject it as lifeless formalism without any connection with real life.<sup>4</sup> Neither does eleventh-century poetry show distinctively popular or vernacular features as some twelfth-century poetry does. It is particularly striking that the poetry receptive to these influences was written either at the very beginning or at the very end of the century. In the period between the

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<sup>1</sup> L 1.29: γεῦμα μικρὸν δαψιλοῦς ἀνθοσμίου.

<sup>2</sup> W 9.533: μικρὰν τεκεῖν ὄρεξιν ἀνδράσι φίλοις.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfram Hörandner, ‘La poésie profane au XIe siècle et la connaissance des auteurs anciens’, *TM*, 6 (1976): pp. 245–263.

<sup>4</sup> See for example *Anthologia Graeca*, ed. H. Beckby (4 vols, Munich, 1957–1958), vol. 1, pp. 61–62.

death of Basileios II (1025) and the establishment of the Komnenian dynasty (1081), nearly all preserved poetry is confined to 'learned' poetry made by elitist intellectuals. By the same token, eleventh-century poetry stands apart from the tradition that interests modern readers, and is denied any artistic vigour and expressiveness.

Thus, bereft of any affinity with either Antiquity or Modernity, isolated from the evolutions in the West (although surely sometimes running parallel to them), and apparently not imitated in other cultural spheres, this poetry seems to us part of a 'dead end'. We lack a reference frame against which to assess it, and this often makes it difficult to appreciate its peculiar aesthetics.<sup>5</sup>

The notion of 'giving a small taste' may from this perspective also signify an attempt to rediscover the contexts in which the aesthetics of this poetry had a meaningful effect. This does not necessarily mean that this poetry needs to be re-appraised, but rather that its aesthetic impact needs to be considered against a historically grounded reference frame.

### Eleventh-century Poetry: An Orientation

When talking about eleventh-century poetry, three names come immediately to mind: those of Michael Psellos, Ioannes Mauropous and Christophoros Mitylenaios, all active in the period between the death of Basileios II and the establishment of the Komnenian dynasty. The importance of these three figures in the literary history of Byzantium is generally acknowledged. However, the problems that their poems raise are numerous and, moreover, difficult to solve by importing solutions from other periods.

The corpus of these three poets is remarkably heterogeneous in both content and genre. Didactic poetry is perhaps the most recognizable genre. However, the bulk of their poems can only be labelled with the broad term 'occasional', or perhaps the insufficient term 'epideictic': encomia in verse, accounts of historical events, satirical pieces, polemics (often related to *schedos* contests), introductions to other texts, funeral verse (as a collective name for various genres sharing the occasion of a death), playful presents for friends, sophisticated *Spielereien*, and so on. Many poems show a clear link with an object they are inscribed on. Hence, they can be qualified as epigrams, but attempting to apply this label to other poems, whether short or long, must be

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<sup>5</sup> For modern Western, Byzantine and other perspectives on literary aesthetics, see Panagiotis Agapitos, 'Η θέση της αισθητικής αποτίμησης σε μια "νέα" ιστορία της βυζαντινής λογοτεχνίας', in Paolo Odorico and Panagiotis Agapitos (eds), *Pour une 'nouvelle' histoire de la littérature byzantine. Actes du colloque international philologique, Nicosie, (25–28 mai 2000)* (Paris, 2002), pp. 185–232.

denounced as unfruitful.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the habit of classifying them under the ancient grid of 'lyric', 'epic', and 'dramatic' has by now been definitively superseded.<sup>7</sup>

What cannot be denied is that this poetry is firmly rooted in the society of its time.<sup>8</sup> Many poems (especially those of Christophoros) depict contemporary life in Constantinople, including its less lofty aspects, in detail. Historical events like dethronements and revolts find a poetic treatment, as well as more popular cultural practices. Concrete occasions, like deaths, festivals, imperial audiences and church restorations, demanded the production of a poem. Family, friends and patrons of the poet are prominently present.

At the same time, the metre and language of their poetry is almost always 'learned', that is, moving between the tight boundaries that Byzantines had set themselves in imitation of ancient literature. The only exceptions, though notable, are Psellos' didactic poems written in *politikoi stichoi*.

Peculiar to the poetry in this period is the emergence of a self-conscious authorial voice. These three poets appear in their poems as self-confident, and at times arrogant, members of the intellectual elite. This is a feature quite new to Byzantine poetry,<sup>9</sup> probably linked to their privileged, but insecure position. Each of these three poets also has a distinct style and distinct self-image. Psellos styles himself as an authoritative teacher, even in his non-didactic poems. Mauropous represents himself as the reclusive and introvert intellectual, while Christophoros, in spite of popular touches here and there, is eager to confirm his elitist position.

One can also point to some other features that these three poets (and some of their less important contemporaries) share: the desire to display knowledge, most prominent in Psellos of course, but not absent from the other two; a strong connection with the court, the city of Constantinople and its intellectual milieu; a remarkable versatility and, finally, a touch of irony, sarcasm, and playfulness.

All these features set off these three collections from the poetry before 1025 and after 1081 and unite them in a certain way; but, as this volume abundantly demonstrates, eleventh-century poetry extends far beyond the 'learned profane' poetry of these three authors.

It should not be forgotten that both Mauropous and Christophoros composed a considerable amount of liturgical poetry. The canons of Mauropous and saints' calendars of Christophoros are important landmarks in their genre. Moreover, apart from the three

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<sup>6</sup> See Marc D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 2003), pp. 22–24.

<sup>7</sup> Such a classification is still to be found in Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (2 vols, Munich, 1978), in which learned profane poetry is not the most extensively discussed genre.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, Nicolas Oikonomides, 'Life and Society in Eleventh Century Constantinople', *Südost-Forschungen*, 49 (1990): pp. 1–19, about Christophoros' poetry book and the contemporary elements described in it.

<sup>9</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, p. 38.

dominant poetic figures, there are numerous other poets, some of them anonymous; their number grows especially if we also include the earlier and later ends of the century.

The reign of Basileios II, as is well known, was not very supportive of rhetorical culture.<sup>10</sup> There are a few poems by Nikephoros Ouranos,<sup>11</sup> some katanyktic alphabets, as well as some epigrams adorning manuscripts offered to Basileios. More important is the poetic production of Symeon Neos Theologos, who uses an array of accentual metres in his hymns and explores personal mystical experience, a theme that is rather unusual.<sup>12</sup> It was also in the early decades of the eleventh century that the poet known as the 'Anonymous of Sola' was active.

In the later decades of the century it was the didactic genre in particular that continued to flourish (with names such as Niketas of Herakleia and Philippos Monotropos), but so did the typical occasional poetry of officials, with the poetry of Theophylaktos of Ochrid, a pupil of Psellos, perhaps being the most important corpus of the period. Michael Grammatikos' poems, which are few but remarkable, can only loosely be dated to the eleventh century.<sup>13</sup> An important body of anonymous eleventh-century poetry is present in the famous manuscript *Marcianus gr. 524*.<sup>14</sup> The list of poets can be completed with a host of names connected to only one poem, and, as some contributions in this volume show, can still be augmented with new names.

Moreover, as in any Byzantine period, there is an abundance of verse inscriptions. Some of them are inscriptions still found *in situ*, attached to buildings and objects of art. An important group of inscriptions are those added to manuscripts, not as independent texts, but as 'book epigrams' connected with the book as an object.<sup>15</sup>

Inscriptions, book epigrams and other isolated poems normally falling outside the scope of literary history are given considerable attention in this volume. This interest demonstrates the growing awareness that Byzantine literary history is not merely a list of authors and works, but can also be conceived of as a universe of cultural practices performed by broad layers of society.

<sup>10</sup> Marc Lauxtermann, 'Byzantine Poetry and the Paradox of Basil II's Reign', in Paul Magdalino (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne, 2003), pp. 199–216.

<sup>11</sup> Edited in Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, 'Versi di Niceforo Uranos in morte di Simeone Metafraste', in *Collectanea Byzantina* (2 vols, Bari, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 565–573.

<sup>12</sup> On Symeon's poetry, see now the collaborative volume Athanasios Markopoulos (ed.), *Τέσσερα κείμενα για την ποίηση του Συμεών του Νέου Θεολόγου* (Athens, 2008).

<sup>13</sup> About authorship and date, see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 318–319.

<sup>14</sup> For these poems, see Spyridon Lampros, 'Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524', *NE*, 8 (1911): pp. 3–59, 123–192 and Wolfram Hörandner, 'Epigrams on Icons and Sacred Objects. The Collection of Cod. Marc. gr. 524 once again' in M. Salvatore (ed.), *La poesia tardoantica e medievale. Atti del I Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, Macerata, 4–5 maggio 1998 (Alessandria 2001), pp. 117–124.

<sup>15</sup> See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 197–212.

## The Historical Context

The relation between poetry and the historical context is a particularly problematic one in the eleventh century. There is no consensus about the precise signification of the historical changes in its epoch, or about the value and content of cultural features particular to this period.

The years between the 1025 and 1081 are without doubt one of the most eventful periods of Byzantine history.<sup>16</sup> Several changes and evolutions took place, some of which were abortive, while others lasted until the fall of the empire. The autocratic empire under Basileios developed into a more clan-orientated system under the Komnenoi. This development took place through a rapid succession of emperors and a period of extreme political instability. Several interest groups vied for the power vacuum at the court. The patriarchal institute, with the charismatic figure of Michael Keroullarios, often allied with the populace of Constantinople; military commanders and wealthy land patrons sought influence in the capital, sometimes through revolts. For at least a short period of time, however, the most influential (and most vociferous) group was the 'civil aristocracy', men climbing the bureaucratic hierarchy and gaining influence at court. Conflicts between these interest groups erupt in a string of dramatic events: the period between 1025 and 1081 witnesses popular riots (as in 1042), unsuccessful revolts (1043, 1047), and successful usurpations (1059, 1074, 1081).<sup>17</sup> All this happened while the military defence of the empire disintegrated, culminating in the disastrous Battle of Manzikert and the loss of Asia Minor.

The class of the civil aristocracy brought forth the men who occupied themselves with poetry. Aided by the education they had received at the various schools of the capital, they enrolled in state bureaucracy, profiting from the ample opportunities for social mobility. They established 'horizontal solidarities' (or vehement feuds) with their equals, based on intellectualist ideals of friendship, exploiting these friendships to gain familiarity with the inner circle of the emperor.<sup>18</sup> The term *Beamtenliterat*, coined by Weiss, well sums up the fact that literary pursuits were the outcome (and the basis) of court careers.<sup>19</sup>

Within this particular social constellation intellectuals came to occupy powerful positions. It is the time of the *gouvernement des philosophes*.<sup>20</sup> This did not last long, however. Psellos, Maupous and some others who stood at the head of Konstantinos

<sup>16</sup> For an account of the internal history of the Byzantine empire in this period, see Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025–1204. A Political History* (London/New York, 1997).

<sup>17</sup> For a full list of all revolts and rebellions, see Jean-Claude Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance* (Paris, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> Hélène Ahrweiler, 'Recherches sur la société byzantine au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle: nouvelles hiérarchies et nouvelles solidarités', *TM*, 6 (1976): pp. 99–124.

<sup>19</sup> Günther Weiss, *Oströmische Beamten im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1973), p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> This title was given to a chapter in Paul Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977).

IX Monomachos' administration, fell out of favour for some obscure reason. Psellos was able to re-establish himself, ultimately becoming the favourite intellectual under the short-lived Doukas dynasty (1059–1078).

Traditionally, the 'foundation' of a 'University' under Monomachos, with a Faculty of Law and one of Philosophy, is put forward as an important event, but it seems now certain that there never was a state-supported school for philosophy. Moreover, the extent of the function of 'consul of philosophers', created especially for Psellos, remains unclear.<sup>21</sup> The several small schools in the capital were undoubtedly more important and constant elements in the intellectual life of the period.

Rhetoric and science were eagerly pursued and exercised. Imperial orations abound, as did scientific (or didactic) texts of all sorts. Rhetoric and science also frequently merged into one: Psellos asserts on many an occasion that he has mixed the τέχνη ῥητορική with φιλοσοφία. Texts teem with veneration for *logoi*, a notion that embodies both. Men like Mauropous and Psellos were active on many fronts of *logoi*: from science to hagiography, and from personal letters to public orations. Poems formed only one part of their textual production.

### Some Specific Problems

When we try to grasp the broader cultural and intellectual features that emerge from these texts, we encounter some serious problems, and interpretations by modern scholars diverge dramatically. This is especially due to the dominant, but ambiguous figure of Michael Psellos. Some of his works deal explicitly with the difficulty of reconciling his interest in ancient philosophy with orthodox Christian dogma.<sup>22</sup> Some have been inclined to see in his texts a subversive voice, a humanist (or even neo-pagan) kind of thinking highly critical of Christian dogmas;<sup>23</sup> someone highly unique and innovative.<sup>24</sup> Others have assessed him as a shrewd courtier putting his sophistical qualities to maximum use.<sup>25</sup> At any rate, there are many conflicting voices in Psellos' work, and many contradictory self-representational roles which he cast himself in.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> For a critical view on the so-called university foundation, see Lemerle, *Cinq études*, p. 243, and Weiss, *Oströmische Beamten*, pp. 65–76. Their remarks are not always incorporated in more recent accounts.

<sup>22</sup> See especially Michael Psellos, *Epistola a Giovanni Xifilino*, ed. U. Criscuolo (Naples, 1990).

<sup>23</sup> Most emphatically so Anthony Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia* (Leiden/Boston/New York, 1999).

<sup>24</sup> This is the conclusion of Jakov Ljubarskij, *Michail Psell. Ličnost' i tvorčestvo* (Moskow, 1978), trans. A. Tzelesi, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψέλλου* (Athens, 2004).

<sup>25</sup> This was long time the prevalent view, see the summary of opinions in Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα και έργο*, pp. 12–40.

<sup>26</sup> About self-representation in Psellos, see the current work of Stratis Papaioannou, for example Stratis Papaioannou, 'Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and the Self in Byzantine Epistolography',

The role of 'φιλόσοφος', surely not equal to 'philosopher' in the modern sense, can either be considered as only one of these, or, more provocatively, as the only 'true' voice.

It is equally difficult to grasp the relationship between intellectual pursuits and the state establishment. Superficially most texts display deference towards the imperial rulers, but many scholars are inclined to see hidden voices of dissent. Some of Mauropous' funeral poems in which the emperor confesses his sins (L 81–84) have been interpreted as anti-imperial critique,<sup>27</sup> but of course, generic conventions dictate that the I-voice in funeral poems be critical of the sins of the soul. Likewise, some poems of Christophoros are read as accusations of social injustice or highly critical accounts of emperors,<sup>28</sup> but this demands a considerable interpretative effort from modern readers that might not always rest on a very secure basis.

Perhaps the more narrowly historical interpretations underestimate the impact of genre and rhetoric, and hence the arbitrariness of the argument that is being made. At the same time, however, they may well overestimate the public nature of this poetry, which may have circulated only in rather limited intellectual circles. On the other hand, dismissing these poems as playful and innocent rhetorical exercises perhaps fails to confront the problems they invoke, and reduces their authors to armchair scholars. This they were certainly not: these men were powerful officials actively participating in political events of the time.

Patronage is a thorny question in this regard. Since the social positions of our poets were lucrative, but uncertain, there are various relations of dependence still in the process of being defined, and hence various discursive strategies to obtain patronage. It seems certain however, that the emperor is the most important patron, and certain emperors, like Konstantinos IX Monomachos and Konstantinos X Doukas, were inclined to support literary and intellectual pursuits.

So, we have as yet no firm basis to understand what political value these texts could possibly contain; where intellectualistic indulgence begins and the link to historical reality ends; where precisely the tension lies between generic and rhetorical convention on the one hand, and the constraints of the occasion on the other hand.

Another challenge to which the researcher of literary culture is confronted are the 'gaps' that are surely there, but hard to pinpoint. With 'gaps', we mean the kinds of poetry that circulated in oral form or in a fugitive written form, and have not come down to us. These lacunas (popular songs, rhymes, jokes, libels, school exercises, oral heroic narratives) prevent us from surveying the whole poetic spectrum, but at the same time

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in Wolfram Hörandner and Michael Grünbart (eds), *L'épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique* (Paris, 2002), pp. 75–83. Papaioannou's book on the subject: *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* is eagerly awaited.

<sup>27</sup> Alexander Kazhdan, 'Some Problems in the Biography of John Mauropous, II', *Byz*, 65 (1995): pp. 362–387, esp. pp. 370–371.

<sup>28</sup> See for instance Ugo Criscuolo, 'Sui carmina historica di Cristoforo di Mitilene', in Fabrizio Conca and Gianfranco Fiaccadori (eds), *Bisanzio nell'età dei Macedoni. Forme della produzione letteraria e artistica. VIII Giornata di Studi bizantini, Milano, 15–16 marzo 2005* (Milan, 2007), pp. 51–75.



there is no doubt that they influenced extant texts, and were perhaps more important for subsequent literary evolutions than extant works.

### A Status Quaestionis

Research in these areas is still at an initial phase, with much remaining to be done even in the area of text edition. The poetic works of the three major 'learned' poets, and those of Symeon the New Theologian,<sup>29</sup> can be found in usable modern editions. Those of Christophoros' (Kurtz) and Maupous' (Lagarde) profane poetry are reliable, if somewhat outdated. Westerink's edition of Psellos, while not impeccable,<sup>30</sup> is an undertaking of gigantesque proportions, also in terms of importance for Byzantine studies in general.

The hymnographic calendars of Christophoros are published in a critical edition,<sup>31</sup> but those in ancient metres are not. The hymnographic output of Maupous, likewise, is scattered among newer and older editions.<sup>32</sup> The poems of minor poets (for example Michael Grammatikos and Anon. Sola) are tucked away in old editions which are hard to retrieve and sometimes contain misleading errors.<sup>33</sup> The works of poets like Niketas of Herakleia and Philippos Monotropos are either unedited or appear in unreliable and outdated editions, so for these poets editorial work is still urgently needed.<sup>34</sup> Epigrams constitute another vast area of texts that are insufficiently explored because of the rudimentary state of their edition. The many inscriptions on buildings and works of

<sup>29</sup> A. Kamyblis (ed.), *Symeon Neos Theologos. Hymnen* (Berlin/New York, 1976) and J. Koder (ed.), *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien. Hymnes* (Paris, 1969–1973).

<sup>30</sup> For a thorough critique of Westerink's edition, see Maria Dora Spadaro, 'Note filologiche a poesie del secolo XI', in Ugo Criscuolo and Ricardo Maisano (eds), *La poesia bizantina. Atti della terza Giornata di studi bizantini sotto il patrocinio della Associazione Italiana di Studi Bizantini* (Macerata, 11–12 maggio 1993) (Napoli, 1995), pp. 209–234.

<sup>31</sup> E. Follieri (ed.), *I calendari in metro innografico di Cristoforo Mitileneo* (Brussels, 1980).

<sup>32</sup> For an overview, see Francesco D'Aiuto, *Tre canoni di Giovanni Mauropode in onore di santi militari* (Rome, 1994), pp. 22–24.

<sup>33</sup> For Michael Grammatikos, see Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, 'Intorno a Μιχαήλ γραμματικὸς ὁ ἱερομόναχος', in *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1, pp. 114–120; 'Ancora intorno a Μιχαήλ γραμματικὸς ὁ ἱερομόναχος', in *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1, pp. 121–135, and Spyridon Lampros, 'Επιγράμματα ἀνέκδοτα Μιχαήλ τοῦ Γραμματικοῦ', *NE*, 14 (1917): pp. 3–13. For Anon. Sola, see Giuseppe Sola, 'Giambografi sconosciuti dell'XI secolo', *Roma e oriente*, 11 (1916), pp. 18–27, pp. 149–153.

<sup>34</sup> For Niketas of Herakleia, two exhaustive overviews of his works and manuscripts can be consulted: J. Schneider, 'La poésie didactique à Byzance: Nicétas d'Héraclée', *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, 58 (1999), pp. 388–423 and Bram Roosen, 'The works of Nicetas Heracleensis ὁ τοῦ Σεργῶν', *Byz*, 69 (1999), pp. 119–144. For Philippos Monotropos, see the contribution of Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb in this volume.



art are now gradually being collected in the comprehensive edition of a team based in Vienna, which will henceforth be the definitive starting point for work on epigrams.<sup>35</sup>

But whether texts are edited or not, there remains much to be done to solve elementary questions about them. Studies specifically devoted to eleventh-century poetic texts are very few; indeed, there has never been a concerted and sustained scholarly effort to translate, interpret and explain these texts. A notable exception are the many studies of Anastasi and Crimi, who together with their teams in Sicily in the 1970s and 1980s made a serious effort to provide translations and commentaries of eleventh-century poetry.<sup>36</sup> However, one cannot but conclude that their work has not been followed up intensively outside Italy.

A running commentary on these poems would surely be no luxury for those texts which frequently concentrate on details of contemporary society. For the moment, we have only the commentary on Christophoros by Crimi and his team, which is in itself a starting point rather than an end. Related with this is the dearth of translations, which has hampered the accessibility to this poetry.<sup>37</sup> This makes that analysis and interpretations are almost non-existent. Only very recently do we see an increasing interest in Christophoros' poems and their connection with contemporary social and cultural issues.<sup>38</sup> Mauropous was the subject of a general monograph by Karpozelos.<sup>39</sup> The numerous studies of Anastasi give detailed interpretations of Mauropous' poems and his poetic collection as a whole. While the work done by both scholars is very valuable, it can be corrected and complemented on many points. Karpozelos' work at any rate sparked the only real scholarly debate about this poetry, concerning the

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<sup>35</sup> The first two volumes of this series, edited by Wolfram Hörandner, Anneliese Paul, and Andreas Rhoby, have now been published: Andreas Rhoby (ed.), *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, vol. 1, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken* (Vienna, 2009) and vol. 2, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst* (Vienna, 2010).

<sup>36</sup> For instance Anastasi's translation of Mauropous' collection: *Giovanni Mauropode, metropolita di Euchaita, Canzoniere*, trans. R. Anastasi (Catania, 1984) and his numerous studies on Mauropous in the periodical *Siculorum Gymnasium*, of which the most important is perhaps Rosario Anastasi, 'Su Giovanni d'Euchaita', *SicGymn*, 29 (1976): pp. 19–49. For Christophoros, the translation with introduction and running commentary of Crimi and his team is indispensable, but has known only a limited circulation: Carmelo Crimi, *Cristoforo di Mitilene. Canzoniere*, with the collaboration of R. Anastasi, R. Gentile, A. Milazzo, G. Musumeci, and M. Solarino (Catania, 1983).

<sup>37</sup> Christopher Livanos and Floris Bernard are now preparing a translation of the poems of Mauropous and Christophoros, to be published in the Medieval Library Series of Dumbarton Oaks.

<sup>38</sup> Christopher Livanos, 'Justice, Equality and Dirt in the Poems of Christopher of Mytilene', *JÖB*, 57 (2007): pp. 49–74. See also Paul Magdalino, 'Cosmological Confectionery and Equal Opportunity in the Eleventh Century. An Ekphrasis by Christopher of Mitylene (Poem 42)', in John W. Nesbitt (ed.), *Byzantine Authors: Literary Activities and Preoccupations. Texts and Translations dedicated to the Memory of Nicolas Oikonomides* (Leiden, 2003), pp. 1–6.

<sup>39</sup> Apostolos Karpozelos, *Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βίου και του έργου του Ιωάννη Μαυροπόδου* (Ioannina, 1982).

biographical content of some of Mauropous' poems.<sup>40</sup> After Westerink's edition, Psellos' poetry provoked some philological studies, frequently concentrating on his poem on the Cantic of Canticles.<sup>41</sup>

This would seem to be an appropriate moment to develop this knowledge further. During the past few years, several scientific tools have come to facilitate our study of Byzantine poetry. First of all, there is now the *Initia Carminum Byzantinorum* compiled by Ioannis Vassis, providing the incipits of all Byzantine poems.<sup>42</sup> The *Prosopography of the Byzantine World*, focusing on the middle Byzantine period, contains a wealth of information that is easily accessible, and signifies for Byzantine studies a landmark of an online searchable database.<sup>43</sup> Studies on Psellos can benefit from the compendium *Iter Psellianum*, which provides a comprehensive overview of primary texts and secondary literature.<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, the study of Byzantine literature has recently developed or adopted new approaches that can help us to formulate new questions and to explore new ways of approaching problems. Texts are beginning to be read as objects of study worthy of attention in their own right, instead of just as storerooms of historical facts. Since Kazhdan's radical plea for a contextual approach to literature (and the reactions it provoked),<sup>45</sup> we can no longer ignore the importance of the social agenda of the author and the ideological constraints steering his texts. Also, the debate about what constitutes Byzantine literature, and how we ought to approach it, is at least opening up and gaining resonance.<sup>46</sup>

One important example of an approach to texts in their context is to look, literally, at the con-text of them, that is, the material medium (manuscript, inscription or otherwise) by which the text establishes a communication with its readers. Thanks to the work of Cavallo, Odorico and their pupils we have learnt to understand copying,

<sup>40</sup> See Kazhdan, 'Some Problems'. For a preliminary settling of the matter, see Apostolos Karpozelos, 'The Biography of Ioannes Mauropous Again', *Hellenika*, 44 (1994): pp. 51–60.

<sup>41</sup> For an overview of the problem, correcting earlier studies, see Luciano Bossina, 'Psello distratto. Questioni irrisolte nei versi In Canticum', in Victoria Panagl (ed.), *Dulce Melos. La poesia tardo antica e medievale. Atti del III Convegno internazionale di Studi, Vienna, 15–18 novembre 2004* (Alessandria, 2007), pp. 337–360.

<sup>42</sup> Ioannis Vassis, *Initia Carminum Byzantinorum* (Berlin/New York, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> Prosopography of the Byzantine World, url: <http://www.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/>.

<sup>44</sup> Paul Moore, *Iter Psellianum. A Detailed Listing of Manuscript Sources for All Works Attributed to Michael Psellos, Including a Comprehensive Bibliography* (Toronto, 2005).

<sup>45</sup> Alexander Kazhdan, 'Der Mensch in der byzantinischen Literaturgeschichte', *JÖB*, 28 (1979): pp. 1–21 and the introduction to Alexander Kazhdan and Simon Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1984).

<sup>46</sup> For a state of the question of Byzantine literary studies, see Margaret Mullett, 'New Literary History and the History of Byzantine Literature: A Worthwhile Endeavour?', in Paolo Odorico and Panagiotis Agapitos (eds), *Pour une 'nouvelle' histoire de la littérature byzantine. Actes du colloque international philologique. Nicosie, 25–28 mai 2000* (Paris, 2002), pp. 37–60.

reading, writing and compiling as intellectual practices that are interrelated.<sup>47</sup> Individual manuscripts are now seen as cultural expressions in their own right, instead of just sources for texts. Moreover, the Byzantine reader has come to take a central position, and not in the capacity of passive recipient, but as an active participant.

In the case of epigrams especially, there has been a growing interest in the functional context of poems. This interest has implied a focus on the concrete material medium in which the text is presented to its historical readers. Hörandner's work in this regard was pioneering,<sup>48</sup> while Lauxtermann's influential book on Byzantine poetry before 1000 demonstrates the fruitfulness of an approach to poetry that starts from the question of how the Byzantine reader approached it or used it.

Related to this interest in the functionality of poems is the problem of genre and social occasion. We have become increasingly aware that it is indispensable for our understanding of texts that they were performed on social occasions in front of an audience that had certain expectations.<sup>49</sup> Genre is in this respect no longer a rigid system inherited from antiquity, meant to catalogue textual material. It can be increasingly perceived as the nexus between rhetorical technique and the social occasion, something, in sum, that can be deployed in action.<sup>50</sup>

Another important question is the interaction of poetic texts with the contemporary historical and social context. The first attempts in this direction, especially by Kazhdan, were still narrowly focused on pinpointing literary texts in an ideology dependent on the social position of the author. Gradually, sociological studies of Byzantine texts have shifted away from this 'reflective' view and have been directed towards an approach that takes texts as dynamic social acts. At the forefront now are issues like social networks,<sup>51</sup> power, patronage and performance.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> See for example Guglielmo Cavallo, 'Le pratiche di lettura', in Guglielmo Cavallo (ed.), *Lo spazio letterario del mondo medievale* 3. *Le culture circostanti. La cultura bizantina* (Rome, 2004), pp. 569–604, and Paolo Odorico, 'La cultura della συλλογή', *BZ*, 83 (1990): pp. 1–21.

<sup>48</sup> See for instance Wolfram Hörandner, 'Zur kommunikativen Funktion byzantinischer Gedichte', in *XVIII Mezhdunarodnyj kongress vizantinistov. Plenarnye doklady* (Moskow, 1991), pp. 415–432.

<sup>49</sup> See Panagiotis Agapitos, 'Public and Private Death in Psellos', *BZ*, 101 (2008): pp. 555–607.

<sup>50</sup> Margaret Mullett, 'The Madness of Genre', *DOP*, 46 (1992): pp. 233–243.

<sup>51</sup> A pioneering work in this regard is Margaret Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot, 1997).

<sup>52</sup> For the importance of studying performative aspects of rhetoric, see Margaret Mullett, 'Rhetoric, Theory, and the Imperative of Performance: Byzantium and Now', in Elizabeth Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 151–170.

## Overview of This Volume

The chapters in this book pick up these new approaches to texts and contexts, but they do so on many different fronts.

A first area is that of text edition. The collections of Mauroπους and Christophoros are surely in need of more up-to-date editions that locate more sources and comply with modern editorial standards. Marc De Groote, who is preparing a new edition of Christophoros Mitylenaios, approaches a particular editorial problem: the accentuation of poetic texts, which in Byzantine manuscripts deviates from accepted modern practice.

Other texts, as we have said, are in need of elementary editorial work. Philippos Monotropos' *Dioptra* is currently being edited by Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb (see also below). Epigrams are also an area of which current work is presented here. This proves that profound and detailed editorial work can no longer be confined to greater collections of known poets, but is also a necessity for separate and anonymous texts. As a result, many unknown or little known texts are for the first time explored in this volume. Two contributions are by-products of the ongoing edition of epigrams in Vienna. Andreas Rhoby presents us with some later inscriptions transmitting eleventh-century poems known from manuscripts. These 'matches' can provide important clues to the problem of the link between epigrams transmitted *in situ* and those transmitted in manuscripts. The paper of Anneliese Paul identifies historical figures in eleventh-century inscriptions and makes some important observations about imperial representations in art and epigrams. Several contributions moreover indicate that book epigrams are a rich area to explore. Klaas Bentein and Kristoffel Demoen present work that has grown out of a pilot project for a searchable database of book epigrams. Book epigrams are also the subject of the contributions of Odorico and Lauxtermann, who turn their attention to unedited or unknown poems, and link them with their conditions of writing and reading (see also below).

Other papers focus on literary genre. Wolfram Hörandner discusses the many didactic poems of this period. His contribution identifies the essential features of the didactic genre in these texts, and discusses the tension between knowledge and literary ambition, with special attention for the sometimes extraordinary use of language and metre. Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb focuses her attention on one text, the *Dioptra* of Philippos Monotropos, showing how this remarkable text, through dialogic structure and dramatic personae, is related to the didactic genre. Intertextuality is approached by Claudio De Stefani, who establishes many literary sources of the poems of Ioannes Mauroπους, and thus positions this poet more firmly in a long literary tradition running from Antiquity to recent Byzantine poets. Meticulous analysis of formal features of texts also remains an indispensable element when it is carried out with a view on the purpose and genre of the work under question. Thus, Lia Raffaella Cresci discusses a peculiar body of texts, the calendars of Christophoros. She throws light on compositional techniques and relates the syntactical structuring of his verses to the poetic treatment of the subject under view.

The contributions of both Paolo Odorico and Marc Lauxtermann pay attention to the concrete context of the manuscript in which poems are to be found, in the vein of

the kind of contextual approach we have sketched out above. Underlying both studies is the question of how the practice of writing poems (in the sense of copying, rewriting, or newly creating) is embedded in the creation or compilation of manuscripts. Odorico presents us with the poetic comments of a reader of a historiographical manuscript. By laying bare the (sometimes ideologically coloured) relation between manuscript, reader, and author, he brings up the important question of what constitutes literary creation, suggesting that composition (literally com-position) of poems is closely related to the act of reading and commenting. Lauxtermann concentrates on one particular manuscript (the psalter *Bodl. Clarke 15*), which, in spite of the very interesting poems it contains, has been overlooked so far. He treats the relationship between the poems and the organization and purpose of the manuscript, and identifies Mark the Monk as an important poetic author.

The question of the Byzantine reader is also emphatically present in the paper of Bentein and Demoen. They discuss references and addresses to readers as found in book epigrams. These can provide some important clues for the investigation of Byzantine reading habits and practices.

The contribution of Floris Bernard focuses on poems which present themselves or other objects as gifts. His paper indicates the sociological consequences of the discourse of the gift as it is used in poems, arguing that this discourse supports the coherence of an intellectual elite.

The paper of Magdalino introduces this volume by providing a bird's eye view of the evolution of Byzantine poetry from Geometres to Prodromos, thus situating eleventh-century poetry in the context of Byzantine literary history at large. He examines the use of poetry as a specific medium for the expression of ideas and perceptions, focusing on the notion of *metron*, the aspect of improvisation and collective reading. In its quest to see how poetry reflects cultural changes, the paper stresses the popular, playful, scabrous and autobiographical aspects that are latently present in eleventh-century poetry, and proposes terms such as 'epigrammatic habit' and 'poetic journalism' to describe phenomena typical of poetic production in Byzantium.

We hope that this book will indeed offer 'a small taste' for the interested reader, and that it can incite some enthusiasm for the interesting problems that are raised by this poetry.

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# PART II

## Contexts

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## Chapter 2

# Cultural Change?

### The Context of Byzantine Poetry from Geometres to Prodromos

Paul Magdalino

The title of this paper consciously echoes the title of the book that best represents the paradigm and the framework for the present volume.<sup>1</sup> The 1985 study by Alexander Kazhdan and Ann Wharton Epstein was not the first or the last attempt to place the eleventh century at the centre of the most important literary and artistic developments in medieval Byzantium. However, it remains the fullest single statement of the model that has imposed itself as a consensus among Byzantinists over the past half-century (and longer, if we include the pioneer work of Joan Hussey on eleventh-century humanism). The main points of this consensus may be summarized as follows. Firstly, the Byzantine reception of the classical and early Christian heritage was not passive or static, but creative, dynamic, and constantly evolving. Secondly, its most creative and dynamic transformations began in the eleventh century, when the emphasis shifted from conservation and formal imitation of the past to the use of inherited modes to express contemporary and personal concerns. Hellenism, humanism and individualism came to the fore. Thirdly, the process did not stop with the political downturn, social reaction and ideological repression at the end of the eleventh century, but continued throughout the twelfth, notably with the revival of the ancient genre of the novel and the emergence of court vernacular literature. Fourth, cultural change was accompanied by and dependent on social and economic change that challenged the theocratic and hieratic structure of the Byzantine state. To oversimplify, as towns and the economy grew, there was increasing social differentiation between a military-minded, hereditary court nobility and a commercial, professional and intellectual bourgeoisie. The horizontal solidarities of these groups began to conflict with their service to the emperor, and led to sharper distinction between cultural patrons and cultural producers. Fifth, and finally, in connection with the growing differentiation of social roles and sophistication of the urban milieu, there was a growing tendency to puncture the mystique of both secular and sacred authority, through oblique and even direct criticism of imperial power, and through satirical denunciation of religious corruption and credulity.

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander P. Kazhdan and Ann Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley/London, 1985).

How does poetry fit into this scheme? Does the evidence for its production from Ioannes Geometres to Theodoros Prodromos, the poets who mark the bookends of the long eleventh century, confirm, modify or even call into question the paradigm of cultural change?

In a purely formal sense, it is immediately obvious that the production of poetry did expand and diversify greatly during the period. In terms of metre, the twelve-syllable paroxytone verse remained the default, all-purpose medium; anacreontics, elegiacs and hexameters became less popular, but did not disappear altogether, and hexameters made a strong comeback in the panegyrical and funerary compositions of Theodoros Prodromos.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the fifteen-syllable 'political' verse took off at the beginning of the eleventh century with the hymns of Symeon the New Theologian, and by the end of the twelfth century had taken over in certain subject areas. In terms of genre, purpose and subject matter, there is both continuity and change. Epigrams on works of art and occasional verse – panegyrics, encomia, laudatory ekphraseis, laments, and acclamations – form a copious and constant stream. What one might call poetic journalism – commentary on current affairs and contemporary social situations – is largely an innovation of the period, which appears with Ioannes Geometres and peaks with Christophoros Mitylenaios. It is closely linked to two other interrelated themes that have a longer poetic history, but which also proliferate and diversify throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries: self-representation and personal invective. We will come back to these themes. Beyond this, two major innovations stand out, both involving the production of much longer poems. One is the exploitation of verse, particularly political verse, as a medium for teaching and exegesis. This can possibly be regarded as an evolution from the catanyctic alphabet; it appears to have been pioneered by Symeon the New Theologian for his monastery.<sup>3</sup> The most impressive example of the genre, the *Dioptra* of Philippos Monotropos, was also written by and for a monk, and the patriarch Nikolaos III wrote his poem on fasts at the behest of the *protos* of Mt Athos. However, most surviving pieces of didactic verse were written by secular intellectuals for the instruction and edification of emperors and their relatives. Here the pioneer was unquestionably Michael Psellos, who wrote verse textbooks on theology, rhetoric, law, medicine and other minor pieces for the benefit of Konstantinos IX Monomachos, Isaak I Komnenos, and Michael VII Doukas and his family. These texts account for over two thirds of the pages occupied by Psellos' genuine poetic oeuvre in the printed edition by Westerink; a high proportion of the works that Westerink classifies as *spuria* are also

<sup>2</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte*, ed. W. Hörandner (Vienna, 1974), nos. II, III, VI, VIII, XXXVIII, XLII, LVb, LXVIII–LXIX. For anacreontics and elegiacs by Prodromos and Euthymios Tornikes, see *ibidem*, LVId; Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Noctes Petropolitanae* (St Petersburg, 1913), pp. 190ff.

<sup>3</sup> On the origins of political verse, still useful is Michael J. Jeffreys, 'The Nature and Origins of the Political Verse', *DOP*, 28 (1974): pp. 142–195 [repr. in Elizabeth M. and Michael J. Jeffreys, *Popular Literature in Late Byzantium* (London, 1983), no. IV]; Marc D. Lauxtermann, *The Spring of Rhythm* (Vienna, 1999); for Symeon, see most recently Athanasios Markopoulos (ed.), *Τέσσερα κείμενα για την ποίηση του Συμεών του Νέου Θεολόγου* (Athens, 2008).

of a didactic nature.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps even more prolific than Psellos was Ioannes Tzetzes, who wrote his long allegories of Homer and Hesiod for Comnenian imperial ladies in the mid twelfth century.<sup>5</sup> Introductions to astrology survive from around the same time, the most important being the one composed by Ioannes Kamateros for the emperor Manuel I.<sup>6</sup> Some passages of this work reflect historical realities of the eleventh century, which may indicate that Kamateros incorporated sections of an earlier text.<sup>7</sup> If so, this would be one bridge across the long chronological gap that seems to separate the didactic poems of Psellos from those of the mid twelfth century. Another bridge of a sort might be identified in the *Mousai* attributed to Alexios I, since these iambs addressed to the emperor's son and successor Ioannes II certainly profess a didactic purpose.<sup>8</sup> However, they also contain a narrative element, which links them to the other main new departure in the production of long poems: the choice of verse, either twelve-syllable or fifteen-syllable, for the composition of extended narratives.

This was not altogether without precedent, as we can see in the poems of George of Pisidia, and in Theodosios the Deacon's celebration of the recapture of Crete by Nikephoros Phokas.<sup>9</sup> However, such texts are curiously lacking in the eleventh century, and the long verse narratives that appear in the twelfth century, from the 1130s on, do not consist solely of encomia, but include works of fiction, history, and dramatization of personal experience. The pioneer was probably Theodoros Prodromos, who in addition to celebrating the victories of Ioannes II in epic style, wrote the comic and possibly satirical *Katomyomachia* (*Katz-Mäuse Krieg*),<sup>10</sup> and inaugurated the revival of the ancient novel with his *Rodanthe and Dosikles*.<sup>11</sup> Niketas Eugenianos and Konstantinos

<sup>4</sup> Michael Psellos, *Poemata*, ed. L.G. Westerink (Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1992); see the article by Wolfram Hörandner in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Jeffreys, 'Nature and Origins', pp. 148ff.

<sup>6</sup> Jeffreys, 'Nature and Origins', pp. 157–158; Ioannes Kamateros, *Εισαγωγή ἀστρονομίας*, ed. L. Weigl, *Ein Kompendium griechischer Astronomie und Astrologie, Meteorologie und Ethnographie* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1908).

<sup>7</sup> Paul Magdalino, *L'orthodoxie des astrologues. La science entre le dogme et la divination à Byzance (VII<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Paris, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> This must still be consulted in the edition by Paul Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios', *BZ*, 22 (1913): pp. 348–362; for discussion and announcement of a still forthcoming edition and translation, Margaret Mullett, 'Alexios I Komnenos and Imperial Revival', in Paul Magdalino (ed.), *New Constantines. The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1994), p. 265. The new edition is to be in the companion volume to Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe (eds), *Alexios I Komnenos*.

<sup>9</sup> Theodosios the Deacon, *De Creta capta*, ed. N.M. Panagiotakes, *Θεοδόσιος ὁ Διάκονος καὶ τὸ ποίημα αὐτοῦ "Ἀλωσις τῆς Κρήτης"* (Heraklion, 1960); Theodosios the Deacon, *De Creta capta*, ed. U. Criscuolo, *Theodosii Diaconi De Creta capta* (Leipzig, 1979).

<sup>10</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, *Katomyomachia*, ed. H. Hunger, *Der byzantinische Katz-Mäuse-Krieg: Theodoros Prodromos, Katomyomachia* (Graz, 1968).

<sup>11</sup> For editions and dating of this and the other twelfth-century novels, see now Panagiotis Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia. A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel* (Cambridge MA, 2005).

Manasses followed with their verse romances, to which Manasses added his chronicle in political verse<sup>12</sup> and his hammed-up account of his travels in Syria, Palestine and Cyprus.<sup>13</sup> One should also mention the *Chiliades* of Tzetzes, which contain many short narratives.<sup>14</sup> From the end of the century we have Stilbes' vivid account of the great fire in Constantinople of 1197.<sup>15</sup> Of indeterminate but probably twelfth-century date are the first complete biographical narrative of *Digenes Akrites*<sup>16</sup> and the dramatization of an extraordinary nun's story that came before the penitential tribunal of the patriarchate.<sup>17</sup>

These formal changes in the production of poetry coincide with a growing professionalism in the status of the poet as an intellectual (*logios*). Although it is safe to assume that poets had always produced their work, especially their epigrams and pieces of occasional verse, in the expectation of some kind of reward, the expectation is rarely made explicit.<sup>18</sup> The poems that do make it explicit, and break, as it were, the code of silence, are therefore significant markers in the development of a more contractual, professional relationship between writer and patron. The earliest such text that I know is a poem by Psellos, asking an unnamed emperor, probably Michael IV, to 'receive this discourse as a present from your servant, and give in return a worthy reward, by enrolling me among your notaries' (W 16.15–17).<sup>19</sup> The author further implies that he has earned this recompense by his previous devotion to his books and writing, and by the successful outcome of the prayer he had offered for the dispersal of the dark cloud that had threatened to blot out the emperor's shining rays. It is at least an interesting coincidence that this explicit presentation of poetry in return for patronage comes from the pen of the writer who later pioneered the composition of didactic verses at the court of Konstantinos IX Monomachos, and generally presided over the cultural activity of that emperor's reign, which included the poetical oeuvre of Ioannes Mauropous and Christophoros Mitylenaios. But these poets, like Psellos and like Ioannes Geometres before them, were all in public careers, and received their payment in the form of incidental favours and official appointments. This was no longer the case, however, a hundred years later. None of the main twelfth-century poets, with the exception of Theodoros Balsamon, is known to have held offices or titles. They either had intellectual jobs as doctors and teachers, or they held paid livings attached

<sup>12</sup> Konstantinos Manasses, *Breviarum chronicum*, ed. O. Lampsidis (2 vols, Athens, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> Konstantinos Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, ed. Konstantin Horna, 'Das Hodoiporikon des Konstantin Manasses', *BZ*, 13 (1904): pp. 313–355.

<sup>14</sup> Ioannes Tzetzes, *Historiae*, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Naples, 1968).

<sup>15</sup> Konstantinos Stilbes, *Poemata*, ed. J. Diethart and W. Hörandner (Munich/Leipzig, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> *Digenis Akritis. The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions*, ed. E. Jeffreys (Cambridge, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> Ruth Macrides, 'Poetic Justice in the Patriarchate, Murder and Cannibalism in the Provinces', in Ludwig Burgmann, Marie Theres Fögen and Andreas Schminck (eds), *Cupido Legum* (Frankfurt, 1985), pp. 137–168.

<sup>18</sup> See Marc D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 2003).

<sup>19</sup> See Floris Bernard in this volume.

to the great imperial religious houses, or they were on the payroll of the emperor or some princely household.<sup>20</sup> The best of them, at least, expected to be kept in return for producing literature. This is clear from fairly direct allusions, and above all from the vernacular pleas for support that Theodoros Prodromos and Ptochoprodromos (if they are not the same person) addressed to Ioannes II and Manuel. Prodromos has been referred to as a 'poet laureate', and the expression is not inappropriate, because we know from a letter of Tzetzes that Manuel honoured a certain court poet, who hailed from Panion, with a triumph and a coronation.<sup>21</sup> In one manuscript of Prodromos' poem on the virtues and vices, the lemma gives Paniotes as the author's name.<sup>22</sup> Does this mean that Prodromos was the poet from Panion? It is hard to prove, though it is also hard to think of a better candidate.

So far, the search for cultural change in the formal content and social parameters of Byzantine poetry from Geometres to Prodromos has focused on the twelfth century at the expense of the eleventh. But there is another way to approach poetry as evidence for cultural change that gives equal weight to the eleventh century, or indeed places the eleventh century at the centre of the picture. This is to look at poetry as a medium for the literary expression of new and original ideas and perceptions. It is immediately striking how much of the evidence for cultural dynamism and sophistication in Byzantium occurs in verses written during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Put another way, poetry provides a high proportion of our evidence for works of art and the facts of life, as well as for personal attitudes to life, art, culture, and society. As historians, we already pay attention to what poems say. As philologists and literary critics, we analyse the forms and the terms in which they say it. But as cultural historians, we need also to focus on the fact that poetry is saying it, and this particularly is the point I want to pursue in reviewing the subject matter of poetry in the long eleventh century.

Poetic ekphrasis of the period not only document the existence and the appearance of lost buildings, gardens and mosaics; they also formulate an aesthetic of the functional and the mundane that is at least based on original observation, if not entirely innovative. We can see the beginnings of this in Ioannes Geometres' ekphrasis of a tower in the city walls (poem 13),<sup>23</sup> a piece which celebrates 'the beauty of castles' as Henry Maguire

<sup>20</sup> For a survey of literary patronage in the twelfth century, see Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 335–356.

<sup>21</sup> Ioannes Tzetzes, *Epistulae*, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), pp. 141–142, p. 173; Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel*, p. 410.

<sup>22</sup> *Laur. San Marco* 318: Hörandner, *Historische Gedichte*, p. 53.

<sup>23</sup> I use the numbering of Geometres' poems according to their sequence in *Par. suppl. Gr.* 352, as established by Emilie van Opstall in the appendix to her edition of his hexameter and elegiac poems: E.M. van Opstall (ed.), *Jean Géomètre, Poèmes en hexamètre et en distiques élégiaques* (Leiden, 2008), pp. 551–558. For the texts of the dodecasyllable poems not published by van Opstall, I refer to the edition by John Anthony Cramer, *Anecdota graeca e codd. Manuscriptis Bibliothecae Regiae Parisiensis* (Oxford, 1841, repr. Hildesheim, 1967), vol. 4, pp. 278–280.

has put it.<sup>24</sup> The idea is developed much further by Christophoros Mitylenaios in his ekphrasis of the spider and of the astronomical loaf baked by his cousin (K 42, 122).<sup>25</sup> Both the humble invertebrate and the humble housewife are praised for having rivalled the great scientists and artists of antiquity. The ekphrasis of the spider is of course a celebration of the beauty of nature, and therefore of God the Creator, and there may be in both pieces a touch of humour and virtuosity. However, Christophoros states that God has most wisely given the lowly spider the gift of knowledge, and this is consistent with what he writes in another poem about the ant: 'this tiny animal, but great in mind' (K 125). Christophoros also endows the spider with a touch of human personality when he observes that it 'takes great delight' in eating the flies it has caught in its web. In a similar vein, he observes elsewhere that the mousetraps and the cats he has set up in his house are of no avail, because the mice make themselves at home in the traps, and treat the cats as accomplices (K 103). He likes the owl that wakes him at night (K 131). His celebration of his cousin's home baking carries quite a radical, egalitarian point, which he expresses in other poems, and notably in the one entitled 'Against the inequality of life' (K 13).<sup>26</sup> Thus in his poetry, Christophoros Mitylenaios intellectualizes an affection for nature and an admiration of homely skills, in a way that consciously departs from, perhaps even defies, the accepted canon of literary taste and philosophical values, and that does not find expression in prose.

The poetics of art thus merge inexorably with the poetics of life. Byzantine poetry of this period provides considerable evidence for contemporary realia, for both the extraordinary incidents and normal situations of ordinary life, and it does so precisely because its authors show an unprecedented interest in commenting on subject matter derived not from books, or from religious tradition, but from observation and experience. This surely reflects cultural originality and sophistication, if not cultural change. It is true that the literary treatment often consists in reducing the observation to a banal, moralising formula or a contrived paradox, but sometimes it takes the form of a lively and graphic evocation, using descriptive, narrative and dramatic techniques.

<sup>24</sup> Henry Maguire, 'The Beauty of Castles: A Tenth-Century Description of a Tower at Constantinople', *DChAE*, 17 (1993–1994): pp. 21–24. Further on the aesthetic of fortifications, see Helen Saradi, 'The *Kallos* of the Byzantine City: The Development of a Rhetorical Topos and Historical Reality', *Gesta*, 31 (1995): pp. 37–56; Nikolas Bakirtzis, 'The Visual Language of Fortification Facades: The Walls of Thessaloniki', *Μνημείο και Περιβάλλον*, 9 (2005): pp. 15–34. For another eleventh-century example, see André Jacob, 'Le topotérète de la flotte Constantin et la révolte de Georges Maniakès en 1042 dans une inscription inédite de Terre d'Otrante', *Nέα Πώμη*, 4 (2007): pp. 163–176.

<sup>25</sup> For a translation and commentary on K 42, see Paul Magdalino, 'Cosmological Confectionery and Equal Opportunity in the Eleventh Century. An Ekphrasis by Christopher Mitylenaios (Poem 42)', in John W. Nesbitt (ed.), *Byzantine Authors: Literary Activities and Preoccupations. Texts and Translations dedicated to the Memory of Nicolas Oikonomides* (Leiden, 2003), pp. 1–6.

<sup>26</sup> See Nicolas Oikonomides, 'Life and Society in Eleventh-Century Constantinople', *Südost-Forschungen*, 49 (1990): pp. 1–14, at p. 13; Christopher Livanos, 'Justice, Equality and Dirt in the Poems of Christopher of Mytilene', *JÖB*, 57 (2007): pp. 49–73.



In this the undisputed master is Christophoros Mitylenaios, who is exceptional in the range of subjects that he covers, in the realism with which he depicts them, and in the harmony with which he combines subjective involvement and objective portrayal.<sup>27</sup> No other Byzantine poet whose works survive shows such a taste or a talent for what we might call poetic journalism. However, it is important to emphasize that Christophoros was not unique or anomalous in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but an extreme representative of a contemporary trend, and that social commentary on the urban scene was practised by other poets before him, at the same time, and after him. Among the poems of Ioannes Geometres are several that comment on the current political situation or its effects: apart from those that are plainly patriotic, encomiastic or funerary, they are remarkable for their pessimism and their thinly veiled criticism of the current regime of Basileios II, reflected in regret for the late Nikephoros Phokas (poems 2, 31, 61, 80, 141, 147),<sup>28</sup> and disapproval of the destruction caused by the government's own allies (poems 25, 298).<sup>29</sup> One long poem, 'On the revolt', is a graphically apocalyptic evocation of the civil war expressed as a prayer for deliverance by the City of Constantinople (poem 7).<sup>30</sup> The civil war in the east is again the backdrop for the poet's account of his attempt to get away to what he thought would be the calm of the west (poem 232).<sup>31</sup> He had not progressed far on the road to Selymbria when he saw a party of defenceless travellers, including nuns, being robbed and raped by a large company of wild bandits. Continuing his journey, he saw the fields cracked and wilted by a terrible drought, and the peasants bewailing their inability to feed their families and pay their taxes. This was plainly not the work of Scythian raids, but of 'fire from heaven, providence and punishment, incinerating the earth which had been polluted by unlawful envy, rapine, thieving perjury, outlandish sex, unspeakable deeds and plots'. So after a month in the country, the poet thought of returning to Constantinople, but then he heard that the city was burning with the fires of Sodom. He chose to stay in the country as the lesser of two evils.

All is not gloom with Geometres, however. For example, he wrote one short poem in appreciation of the wine of Prainestos (poem 92),<sup>32</sup> and another, longer one celebrating a musician so melodious that he could calm the waves, charm the fish and the dolphins, and make the very boat that was carrying them want to dance (poem 11).<sup>33</sup> This suggests that Geometres had heard the musician perform on a boat trip like the one marvellously evoked in a poem by a younger contemporary, writing to an absent friend to tell him what a great party he had missed.<sup>34</sup> The poet and his friends had taken a boat across the

<sup>27</sup> For the range of subjects, see Oikonomides, 'Life and Society', pp. 3–4.

<sup>28</sup> Poems 2, 31, 141: *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, pp. 266–267, p. 283, p. 305; for similar sentiments by Ioannes of Melitene, see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 232ff, pp. 305ff.

<sup>29</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, p. 282, pp. 342–347.

<sup>30</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, pp. 271–273.

<sup>31</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, pp. 322–325.

<sup>32</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, p. 297.

<sup>33</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, pp. 275–276.

<sup>34</sup> Giuseppe Sola, 'Giambografi sconosciuti del secolo XI', *Roma e l'Oriente*, 11 (1916): pp. 20–21.

Bosphoros on a perfect day. They had enjoyed the sun, the sea, and the luxuriant foliage of the Asian shore. The oarsmen had struck up sailors' songs, while the friends had recited every kind of poetry and rhythmic prose. They enjoyed themselves immeasurably, downing innumerable cups of wine (κρατῆρας ἐκπίνοντες οὐ μετρούμενους), and returned to harbour at sunset in a thoroughly good mood. Marc Lauxtermann has rightly picked on this text to illustrate the context in which poetry was tasted, and we shall return to it.<sup>35</sup>

Poetic journalism is not entirely missing from the poems of Ioannes Mauropous that he selected for publication. Apart from the topical references in his encomia and epigrams, we may cite his poems nos. 51–52, on the man who tore up his manuscript then stuck it together again, no. 53, a comment on a pamphlet against the emperor and patriarch, and no. 66, on the meteoric promotion of a young man who was *mystographos* yesterday, is *exaktor* today, and would no doubt go on to hold a higher title tomorrow – though in the end, he would perish together with all his titles. Another moralising poem in a similar vein by an anonymous contemporary of Mauropous, is addressed, according to the lemma, 'To Boumes as he thrashes the naked women, covers their faces with soot, and thus exposes them to public ridicule': the distich runs, 'As you conceal what is uncovered and reveal the hidden parts, do you not secretly fear the watching word of God?'<sup>36</sup> We can be grateful to the author, and the copyists, of these sententious lines – which were no doubt lost on Boumes – for having rescued from complete oblivion some hapless Byzantine women convicted of prostitution or adultery and the lowly employee of the prefect's office, perhaps the public executioner, charged with preparing them for their shameful parade through the streets.<sup>37</sup> Similar thanks are due, while we are on this subject, for another anonymous poem in the same manuscript, which according to its lemma was inscribed below the icon of St George that the author put up over the entrance to his house to commemorate its preservation from a fire.<sup>38</sup> The fire had spared the house, along with the adjoining church of the saint, but it had quite properly destroyed the houses of the neighbouring prostitutes. For, as the text of the poem says, 'it was not right that while the glory of God was being chanted in church, the neighbourhood should resound to the carousing of whores'.

In this connection, we may note that the most explicit, graphic allusions to extra-marital sex occur in verse rather than in prose. A lively example from the eleventh century can be found in the satirical poem by Michael Grammatikos on the extraordinary rise of the bishop of Philomelion.<sup>39</sup> This ignorant rustic had earned his promotion by pimping

<sup>35</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, p. 55.

<sup>36</sup> Spyridon Lampros, 'Ο Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524', *NE*, 8 (1911): pp. 6–7.

<sup>37</sup> On the shameful parade, see Paul Magdalino, 'Tourner en dérision à Byzance', in Élisabeth Crouzet-Pavan and Jacques Verger (eds), *La dérision au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2007), pp. 55–72, at 64ff.

<sup>38</sup> Lampros, 'Ο Μαρκιανὸς', pp. 18–19.

<sup>39</sup> Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, 'Ancora intorno a Μιχαὴλ γραμματικὸς ὁ ἱερομόναχος', *Bessarione*, 21 (1917): pp. 348–363, repr. in Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina* (Bari, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 121–135, at 128–131. The poem is translated, with commentary on a linguistic detail, by Frederick Lauritzen, 'Michael the Grammarian's irony about hypsilon', *Byzantinoslavica*, 66 (2009), pp. 161–168. On the author, see Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, pp. 318–319.



for Metropolitan Philip of Amorion.<sup>40</sup> He had made himself indispensable not only to the metropolitan, but also, more decisively, to the virgins and young widows whom he lured into his master's bed, and who apparently quite liked what they found there: 'as I procured for them no little joy, no small man but one big in the act ... easily aroused, extremely pleasurable'. In return for this service, one of Philip's girlfriends had given the metropolitan no rest, falling on her knees but also slapping his cheeks and pulling his beard, until he found a bishopric for his obliging servant. 'Now', the protagonist is made to say, 'I ride about and enjoy myself by day, while at night – the dark dictates my doings'. In the twelfth century, Tzetzes remarks on a not dissimilar scene in Constantinople, where ambitious junior clerics pleased rich, loose ladies to advance their careers: 'shameless priests or deacons corrupting themselves with shameless women, like the Cretan abomination with Madam Gararaina. With the aid of his fleshy crowbar she has uplifted every bit of marble paving from her house and given it to the lad along with all manner of beautiful things and loads of money, in order that with this he may purchase a bishopric as the reward for his efforts in nocturnal combat'.<sup>41</sup> Ioannes Kamateros, in his versified *Introduction to Astrology*, states that a girl born in the transition from Sagittarius to Capricorn will be 'an unbridled harlot (*kourva*), like Kroustallinitza'.<sup>42</sup> Given that Kamateros dedicated his work to Manuel I, he may have reckoned on his dedicatee being personally acquainted with Kroustallinitza, and in this connection we may recall that another poet, 'Manganeios Prodomos', refers quite openly to sex in his encomia to Manuel.<sup>43</sup>

In other ways, too, verse was apparently the medium for saying the things that could not be said in prose. Others have already observed that Ioannes Geometres' poetic laments for Nikephoros II and Christophoros Mitylenaios' lines on the rapid closure that the widowed empress Zoe brought to the reign of Romanos III (K 8), could easily have been construed as disloyalty to the current regime.<sup>44</sup> Ioannes Geometres expressed his admiration for the ancient philosophers in verse (poems 19–20, 23–24, 26, 37–38, 217–218, 255–256).<sup>45</sup> It was in a short poem, and not in a prose oration or a letter, that Ioannes Mauropous made his emotional plea for the salvation of Plato and Plutarch, which, more than any other statement of reverence for Hellenic antiquity, has become emblematic of the new humanism of the eleventh century (L 43). It was also in verse

<sup>40</sup> Presumably the incumbent of this name who was present at a meeting of the patriarchal synod in 1030: Gerhard Ficker, *Erlasse des Patriarchen von Konstantinopel Alexios Studites* (Kiel, 1911), pp. 8–21.

<sup>41</sup> Tzetzes, *Historiae*, pp. 91–92 (with emendation of Leone's text).

<sup>42</sup> Weigl, *Ein Kompendium*, line 1251.

<sup>43</sup> See Paul Magdalino, 'Eros the King and the King of *Amours*: Some Observations on *Hysmine and Hysminias*', *DOP*, 46 (1992): pp. 197–204, at 200–202.

<sup>44</sup> Oikonomides, 'Life and Society', p. 9, who also comments on 'the quite flattering epigram (K 65) that Christophoros wrote for the rebel Maniakes shortly after his death on the battlefield'. For Geometres' 'epitaphs' on Nikephoros II, see above.

<sup>45</sup> Poems 19–20, 37–38, 217–218, 255–256: *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, p. 281, p. 284, pp. 318–319, p. 329.

that Mauropous chose to make other controversial statements: to defend his decision to portray Theodoret along with the other Orthodox Church fathers (L 49), and to challenge the conventional classification of the homilies of Gregorios of Nazianzos into those that were read and those that were not read in church (L 29). It was in the verse *programmata* to his orations on the Dormition and on the Archangels, and not in the orations themselves, that he chose to explain a main reason for writing in each case: that he lived near churches with these dedications (L 27–28). Most interestingly, he committed to verse his reasons for not continuing with the history, evidently of his own times, that he had been commissioned to write: he did not want to have to tell lies (L 96). When we add the fact that all his reflections on himself, his house and his career, are also in verse (L 40–41, 47–48, 54, 89–99), it becomes clear that much, if not all, of what makes Mauropous seem like a novel and arresting figure, is due to his poetry.<sup>46</sup> Without it, he might seem like a more ordinary Byzantine teacher and bishop.

As with sex, so with literary convention, the practice of using verse to show and tell was picked up by Tzetzes in the mid twelfth century. It is his political verse *Chiliades* that contains his famous statement exposing the double-tongued nature of rhetoric.<sup>47</sup>

Reverence and nostalgia for the classics were one side of the new humanism. Another was the development of a more critical, secular attitude towards the sacred institutions of the Church and monasticism. Again, the beginnings of this attitude are to be found in poetry, a full decade before its first, faint prose appearance in Psellos' *Chronographia*. Psellos' denunciation of the monk Sabbaites, though clearly a piece of overblown *ad hominem* invective in response to a witty jibe (wittier than the riposte), envisages the greed and hypocrisy of the monastic establishment, not just the foibles of an individual.<sup>48</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios criticizes the monks of the monastery of Manuel, a large and respectable urban foundation, for wearing fancy hats (K 120), and those of the Proedros monastery for feasting on sturgeon (K 135). He also, famously, makes fun of the monk Andreas for his naïve and gullible purchasing of bogus relics (K 114); although, as Oikonomides points out, he does not accuse Andreas of hypocrisy – Andreas is no Fra Cipolla<sup>49</sup> – he does implicitly call the veneration of relics into question. He pours scorn on the new recruits to the clergy of the Great Church for their lowly, commercial backgrounds and their lack of education (K 63). Similarly, as we have seen, his contemporary Michael the Grammarian paints a devastating picture of low moral and intellectual standards among the episcopate in Asia Minor. His portrait of the cowherd turned pimp, then made bishop by the philandering but henpecked metropolitan of Amorion, is remarkable both for its finely drawn, graphic details, and the almost complete lack of disillusion and indignation that it evinces. All this may not add up to a major critique of the Church as a whole, or wholesale disaffection with

<sup>46</sup> Mauropous' poem on his home is analysed by Christopher Livanos, 'Exile and Return in John Mauropous, Poem 47', *BMGS*, 32 (2008): pp. 38–49.

<sup>47</sup> Tzetzes, *Historiae*, p. 267.

<sup>48</sup> W 21.

<sup>49</sup> The Franciscan friar satirized in Boccaccio, *Decameron*, VI, 10, for using fake relics to make money out of simple country folk.

Orthodox belief, but it does voice, for the first time in Byzantine history, a distinct lack of reverence for leading sections of the clergy, and it anticipates Ptochoprodromos' satire on the *hegoumenoi* (also in verse) by a century.<sup>50</sup>

Moral criticism of corrupt and ignorant clergy is closely related to social criticism of the unfair advantages enjoyed by unworthy and vainglorious people. Here again, poetry comes up with the earliest and most striking statements,<sup>51</sup> implicitly in the grievances uttered by Ioannes Geometres (poem 298),<sup>52</sup> and more directly in some of the moralizing pieces by Ioannes Mauropous and Christophoros Mitylenaios.<sup>53</sup> Most remarkably, as we have already noted, Christophoros wrote a poem 'Against the inequality of life' (K 13). As Nicolas Oikonomides observed, 'Christopher's attitude was, for the 11th c., something new'.<sup>54</sup> The only parallel that Oikonomides found in Byzantine literature was Alexios Makrembolites' dialogue between the rich and the poor. But there are surely echoes of it in Theodoros Prodromos' 'Verses of complaint against Divine Providence', even if this is a protest not so much against inherited inequalities of wealth as against the reversals of Fortune that create vulgar commercial new wealth and genteel, educated poverty.<sup>55</sup>

Perhaps the most important single plank in the argument for cultural change in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is the perceived rise in the psychological and cultural profile of the individual, as exemplified by Michael Psellos in his *Chronographia* and other writings.<sup>56</sup> This is hardly the place to undertake a full study of poetic self-assertiveness,<sup>57</sup> but some comment is needed, since it seems to be the case that the self-representational or autobiographical urge bursts on the Byzantine cultural scene through poetry before it gets going in prose – with the obvious but unimportant exception of the letter, an *ipso facto* first-person genre whose continued existence does not signal cultural change. Self-representation is not only the most important of the innovative poetic themes of

<sup>50</sup> See Michael Angold, 'Monastic satire and the Evergetine tradition in the twelfth century', in Margaret Mullett and Anthony Kirby (eds), *The Theotokos Evergetis and eleventh-century monasticism* (Belfast, 1994), pp. 86–102; for a literary appreciation of the Prodromic poems, see Margaret Alexiou, *After Antiquity. Greek Language, Myth and Metaphor* (Ithaca/London, 2002), pp. 127–148.

<sup>51</sup> See also the poem by Symeon the Logothete (?) against a medical assistant who rose to become a judge: V. Vasilievsky, 'Dva nadgrobykh stikhotvoreniia Simeona Logofeta', *VV*, 3 (1896): p. 578 (poem II).

<sup>52</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, p. 342.

<sup>53</sup> L 66; K 20, 35, 85, 99.

<sup>54</sup> Oikonomides, 'Life and Society', p. 13.

<sup>55</sup> PG 133, cols. 1333–1340. Prodromos did, however, balance this with a more benign, prose treatise on Providence: *ibidem*, 1291–1302.

<sup>56</sup> On Psellos' self-projection, see Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, pp. 222–224; Ruth Macrides, 'The Historian in the History', in Costas Constantinides, N.M. Panagiotakes, Elizabeth Jeffreys, A. Angelou (eds), *Φιλέλλην. Studies in Honour of Robert Browning* (Venice, 1996), pp. 205–224.

<sup>57</sup> See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, p. 38, who promises such a study.

the eleventh century, but it is also the one that connects with all the others. The three major poets who precede or coincide with Michael Psellos – Geometres, Maupous and Christophoros – all have a lot to say about themselves in their poems, and between them they cover three major literary dimensions of self-expression: self-justification and self-flagellation (Geometres),<sup>58</sup> self-examination (Maupous),<sup>59</sup> and narration of personal experience (Christophoros). These dimensions, particularly the first and the last, continue to be explored in the twelfth century: notable examples are the anonymous 168-line poem ‘On teeth’, badly preserved in the *Marc. Gr.* 524,<sup>60</sup> Nikolaos Mouzalon’s verses on his resignation from the archbishopric of Cyprus,<sup>61</sup> and Manasses’ *Hodoiporikon*.<sup>62</sup>

Let us now turn to consider the significance of the fact that these statements and signals of cultural change were published in verse, and in looking at how their medium related to their message, let us also think about the context of their ‘publication’.

Why did eleventh-century Byzantines write about interesting, risqué and controversial things in verse? Why did Byzantines write verse at all? Why does anyone write verse? Writers obviously fell into inherited patterns of expression whose parameters changed only slowly, when they changed at all; choice of medium did not need reflection, let alone explanation. Metre and rhythm add intensity, solemnity and point to the verbal expression of an idea. For the Byzantines, the concept of metre, *metron*, like the concept of word, *logos*, had a quasi-mystical value, because of its multiple meanings, and of course in poetry the two concepts were combined. Just as *logos* also meant speech and reason, *metron* had the additional senses of measure, count, moderation, standard or norm. Ioannes Maupous prefaced the collected edition of his works with an epigram (no. 1) that played on the tag *πάν μέτρον ἄριστον*, ‘everything in moderation’ to explain why the edition was selective.<sup>63</sup> He ended the poetic part of the anthology with another epigram (no. 99) reminding his readers of the ‘infinity (*ἀμετρία*)’ of pains he had taken for their enjoyment. The double meaning of *metron* added resonance to any line of verse in which the word or its derivatives were used. Thus when the author of the anonymous poem on the boat party wrote that the company had had immeasurable fun (*χαρὰς ... οὐ μετρούμενας*) and consumed countless cups of wine (*κρατήρας οὐ μετρούμενους*), we can be sure that a pun was intended.<sup>64</sup> We can also see *double-entendre* – in fact multiple *entendre* – in the last line of Ioannes Geometres’ short poem praising the wine

<sup>58</sup> Poems 53–57, 76, 81, 200, 207, 211, 280, 289–290.

<sup>59</sup> L 89–93.

<sup>60</sup> Noted by Lampros, ‘Μαρκιανός’, p. 12. From the opening line, and from what I have been able to read, it seems that the poem is entirely about toothache.

<sup>61</sup> Sophia I. Doanidou, ‘Η παραίτησις Νικολάου τοῦ Μουζάλωνος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Κύπρου’, *Ελληνικά*, 7 (1934): pp. 109–150.

<sup>62</sup> See above, n. 13.

<sup>63</sup> See also no. 34, addressed ‘To those who versify inappropriately’, in which the tag is quoted and 8 of the 12 lines play on the word *μέτρον*. See also Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 62–63.

<sup>64</sup> Sola, ‘Giambografi’.

of Prainestos (poem 92): ὁ Κυριώτης ταῦτα μετρεῖ καὶ σχέδην.<sup>65</sup> This could mean either 'Kyriotes pours out this wine in a moderate trickle'; on another level, taking *σχέδην* as an accusative noun, it can mean 'Kyriotes uses this wine and paper in moderation'. But Byzantine readers would also not have failed to make the phonetic and etymological associations, on the one hand between *μετρεῖ* and metrical composition, the writing of *ἔμμετρα*, and on the other hand between *σχέδην* and *σχεδιάζειν*, the verb meaning 'to improvise'. So the line could be understood as saying 'Kyriotes versifies in an improvised way'. Two other short poems by Geometres (poems 212, 273) are said in their lemmata to be improvised. Psellos in his invective against Sabbaites says in the text of the poem that he is improvising his riposte. From a century later we have some lines on a piece of ancient sculpture that Leo ὁ τοῦ Μεγίστου composed on the spot (*αὐθωροί*), according to the lemma, at the command of the owner, George Palaiologos.<sup>66</sup> Around the same time, Ioannes Tzetzes added this exceptionally informative heading to some 'Verses composed on the spot and completely without preparation against Skylitzes and the late imperial secretary Gregorios, when they said that Tzetzes was unable to produce anything noble or praiseworthy in verse. As soon as he heard this, he improvised them even while continuing to breathe normally, while the messenger who had spoken the insult wrote them down.'<sup>67</sup> These stray mentions do not indicate whether improvisation was the exception or the rule, but regular improvisation would explain the banal quality of so much Byzantine verse, and it also, I shall argue shortly, suits the context in which it is appropriate to envisage poetry being published or performed. What the fact of improvisation does indicate, however, is that the correct composition of metered discourse was valued for the skill and the superior literacy that it required and displayed in both author and reading or listening public.

Two other factors contributed to privileging the verse option in Byzantium. One was the fact that one of its most revered and approved intellectual models, Gregorios of Nazianzos, had chosen to write his autobiographical works in poetic form, and had vigorously defended his choice in the preface to his collection of poems 'To himself', playing heavily on the notion of *metron*.<sup>68</sup> Mauropous' preface is a deliberate echo. It would be hard to exaggerate the cultural influence of the church father known as the Theologian, for whom Geometres (poem 22),<sup>69</sup> Mauropous (L 29) and Psellos,<sup>70</sup> among

<sup>65</sup> *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, p. 297. The reference is presumably to Prainetos (modern Karamürsel) on the Gulf of Nicomedia: see René Bondoux, 'Les villes', in Bernard Geyer and Jacques Lefort (eds), *La Bithynie au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2003), pp. 403–404. Is the extra 's' a deliberate reference to Praeneste near Rome?

<sup>66</sup> Odysseas Lampsidis, 'Beitrag zur Biographie des Georgios Paläologos des Megas Hetaireiarches', *Byz.* 40 (1970): pp. 94–96.

<sup>67</sup> Sophrone Petridès, 'Vers inédits de Jean Tzetzés', *BZ*, 12 (1903): pp. 568–570 at p. 569.

<sup>68</sup> *Carmen* II, 1, 39, Carolinne White (trans.), *Gregory of Nazianzus, Autobiographical Poems* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 2–9.

<sup>69</sup> See also van Opstall, *Poèmes*, p. 17, p. 31, pp. 581–583 (list of citations from Gregorios).

<sup>70</sup> For the view that Psellos admired Gregorios for his style, but not his thought, see Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 207–209.

many others, professed their admiration. He was a decisive model and inspiration for the composition of poems *εἰς ἑαυτόν*. Churchmen in particular could dignify their own positions and difficulties by echoing the example of their great predecessor who had been reluctant to take up episcopal office, and had then all too hastily resigned it – Ioannes Mauropous and Nikolaos Mouzalon were cases in point.

The other factor that predisposed Byzantine writers to break into verse was the ubiquity of what we might call the epigrammatic habit: the practice of inscribing verses, usually in the 'pure iambs' of rhythmic dodecasyllables, on works of art both great and small, and in the prefaces to numerous books.<sup>71</sup> Poetry was thus a highly visual and visible medium in Byzantium. It is a reasonable guess that the average Byzantine saw more poetry on a daily basis than he saw prose. Rich and literate people saw more than most, in their books and on their inscribed reliquaries, icons and ivories, but every churchgoer would see the epigrams on mosaics and frescoes, just as every resident of Constantinople in the ninth century could see the iambs successively posted by iconoclast and iconophile regimes at the Chalke gate of the imperial palace.<sup>72</sup> Visitors to the arena of the Hippodrome could read a quatrain on the built obelisk, recording that it had been restored and clad in bronze by Konstantinos VII (945–959),<sup>73</sup> and all who passed through the Forum of Constantine from the mid twelfth century could see the verse couplet around the top of the Porphyry Column commemorating its repair by Manuel I (or at least they could see that something was written there).<sup>74</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios wrote, praising the monk Niketas of Synada, that the churches of the City were full of his verses (K 27.30); Niketas was just one of the poets whose works have not survived. Poetry was a better visual medium than prose because its lines of usually equal length could be arranged in neat columns, or disposed separately to form symmetrical frames and friezes for pictorial tableaux. Verse distichs even found their way on to seals – an epigrammatic practice that became a habit precisely in the eleventh century.<sup>75</sup> So ubiquitous and ingrained was the epigrammatic habit, in fact, as to create the impression for the modern observer that a monument or tableau would have been thought naked without its accompanying verses; that a metrical text stamped an *eikon* with the indispensable seal of *logos*. This observation can perhaps provide an insight into the function of 'poetic journalism', of composing verse comments on contemporary situations: it was a transfer of the epigrammatic habit from art to life, from visibility to orality. Students of the Byzantine epigram have commented on the difficulty of distinguishing between poems really inscribed *on* an artefact and poems written *on*

<sup>71</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 131–212, pp. 338–356; Wolfram Hörander and Andreas Rhyboj (eds), *Die kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme* (Vienna, 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 274–284.

<sup>73</sup> Raymond Janin, *Constantinople byzantine* (Paris, 1964), pp. 192–193. A different reading of the text, attributing the restoration to Konstantinos VIII (1025–1028), is given in CIG no. 8703.

<sup>74</sup> For the text, see Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine*, pp. 79–80. The two lines reproduced by Janin are the whole text, and not just the second verse as he implies.

<sup>75</sup> Vitalien Laurent, *Les bulles métriques dans la sigillographie Byzantine* (Athens, 1932).



the subject of an artefact, or, at a further remove, on a scene, like the Transfiguration, that *might be* depicted in an artefact.<sup>76</sup> This ambiguity illustrates, I would suggest, the relationship between the poetic commentator and his subject matter: he is invariably writing about something that is simultaneously visualized by his readers or listeners, in their imagination if not in material reality. He may enhance their visual experience, or he may intellectualize and moralize it, in which case his voice acquires a further poetic dimension: that of the gnomological, monastic tradition.<sup>77</sup> But the epigrammatic tradition remains paramount in 'poetic journalism', the added ingredient being that of the poet showing himself off along with the imagined tableau. In this, the expression 'epideictic epigram', infelicitously used by Kephala in Book IX of the Palatine Anthology, may actually best describe what is happening in Byzantium.<sup>78</sup>

Readers, or listeners? Verse not only looked neat and shapely on the wall, on the page, or on the portable icon frame; it also sounded good – upbeat and finished. With the increasing acceptance of rhythm and avoidance of enjambment, each line of poetry came to constitute a crisp sound-bite, easily absorbed and retained by listeners without loss of attention or interest. I think no one now will have a problem with the basic proposition that Byzantine poetry was written to be recited and heard, and that most poetry, like most literature in general, was 'published' in a performance situation referred to by its participants as a *theatron*.<sup>79</sup> The problem lies in the details. Who constituted these forums? Where were they held? How were they run? Were they the same for each author, and for each of his poems? Can we be sure that every poem was read *viva voce*?

When we look for answers in the texts of the poems themselves, the picture fragments. A large number of poems, the epigrams on works of art, were written primarily to be inscribed, not recited. Occasional verse was presumably recited at ritual occasions – the funeral or commemoration of the person being mourned, an audience held by the person being praised, although the author did not invariably deliver his encomium in person, especially where the emperor was concerned. But it is hard to imagine that regrets for deceased emperors, like the poems of Geometres on Nikephoros Phokas and of Mitylenaios on Romanos III, with the disapproval of the current regime that this implied, were delivered in official gatherings – in fact, could they have been 'published' at all? Poems that explicitly function as letters to absent friends – like the description of the boat party, or Mitylenaios' report on a chariot race at the Hippodrome (K 90) – would have been read out at their destination, and not by the author. Letters of thanks likewise, though what do we make of the pair of poems in which Christophoros thanks a friend for gifts of fruit? In gratitude for the grapes, he says he prefers figs (K 87); then, when he gets the figs, he says he would rather have had grapes (K 88). It is especially hard to envisage the 'publication' of invective poems addressed in the second person to an

<sup>76</sup> See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 151–152, and Andreas Rhoby in this volume.

<sup>77</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 31–33, pp. 241–270.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Marc Lauxtermann, 'What is an Epideictic Epigram?', *Mnemosyne*, 51 (1998): pp. 525–537.

<sup>79</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 48ff, pp. 55ff; Guglielmo Cavallo, *Lire à Byzance* (Paris, 2006), pp. 57–66.

individual or a group, like the monastic communities whom Christophoros berates for their worldliness.

These poems could be highly and even gratuitously abusive. Consider Christophoros' reply to one Basileios surnamed Choirinos who had repeatedly asked for copies of his compositions (K 84).

*Why do you grunt so much, asking for my works,  
and keep on saying, 'Feed me with your writings'?  
Away with you, a pig does not eat honey.  
You can have acorns (βαλάνους), if you like, your favourite dinner,  
and if as well you should be wanting carobs (κεράτια),  
your wife will fill you full of horns (κεράτια).*

No one would have missed the pun on *keratia* (carobs–horns). If they had any sense of risqué double-entendre, they would have picked up the secondary meaning of *balanos* as 'privy member', which found its way into the *Souda* (s.v. Βάλανος). So to this fan who wanted to read (not hear) his works, the poet replied calling him a pig, a *keratas*, and maybe a 'cocksucker'. It is inconceivable that the addressees of such poems were not meant to get the message, and what was the point of the colourful abuse if other people did not get to hear it too? Yet the recipients would hardly have ordered these insults to be declaimed in their presence, and the author's messenger would not have got very far if he had attempted to declaim them unbidden. On the other hand, if the author read it out to a *theatron* of poetry connoisseurs, would it have been to the taste of his audience? The question of taste also applies to the poetry of self-representation. Did a group of cultivated 'theatre' goers really want to listen to some opinionated social misfit prattling on about his career failures, his likes and dislikes, his unfitness for public office, his problems with vermin, his encounters with fishermen (K 127) and market-gardeners (K 105), his toothache? Was all this not just meant to be kept εἰς ἑαυτόν?

The vocal publication of much of the material makes sense if we imagine it happening among a group of friends who trusted and liked each other, who thought of themselves as cultural equals, who met for a sincere exchange of news and views, and shared them in a game of poetic skill; a game in which anything went – lyrical, irreverent, dramatic, scurrilous – as long as it scanned, it was clever, and it did not induce yawning. I would imagine friends sparking off each other with semi-improvised texts, making a lot of it up as they went along. Perhaps they even exchanged metric insults, and the invective poems we have now represent just one side of a dialogue?<sup>80</sup> One cannot exclude the scenario of passive spectators sitting through rehearsed recitals by a single performer, which surely happened on solemn, special occasions such as funerals. But for the more 'journalistic' compositions, one should envisage something like the boat party, perhaps without the

<sup>80</sup> Such as the exchange of insulting poems between Konstantinos Rhodios and the eunuch Theodoros the Paphlagonian: *Anecdota graeca*, ed. P. Matrangola (Rome, 1850), vol. 2, pp. 625–632, although this seems to have been a written exchange, prompted by a book epigram to which Theodoros took exception.



boat – though both Geometres and Christophoros allude to boat trips<sup>81</sup> – but certainly with the countless cups of wine. This is the most likely scenario for which evidence exists, and this I would submit, was the context in which cultural change occurred. One should be careful of assuming, however, that the context was new in the eleventh century: Kephala, in compiling his anthology at the turn of the tenth century, assumed that the improvisation of poetic jibes at drinking parties was as ancient as the examples of this genre that he selected.<sup>82</sup>

Further examination of the texts may tease out other significant references to the social context. In closing, I would like to draw attention to two possible pointers. One is the concern with schools, and school contests, we find in Mauropous (nos. 33, 68) and in Christophoros Mitylenaios (K 9–11).<sup>83</sup> The other is the sense of neighbourhood evinced by both poets. As we have seen, Mauropous, in the verse prefaces to his orations in praise of the Virgin and the Archangels, emphasizes that he seeks their patronage because he is their neighbour, living close to the churches which are their houses.<sup>84</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios mentions on three occasions that he lives near the church of St Protasios at the Strategion (K 36, 68, 114). In one poem, he is fiercely protective of his neighbourhood, writing to demand the return of an icon that has been taken to another part of town (K 68). In another, invective piece, he warns his addressee not to show his face in the neighbourhood of *ta Protasiou* (K 36). Now this is reminiscent of the poem in which Ioannes Geometres heaps abuse on a certain Psenas and tells him not to show his face in the neighbourhood of *ta Kyrou*.<sup>85</sup> Recent commentators have connected this with his supposed membership of a monastery of that name, by which they explain Geometres' other sobriquet, Kyriotes.<sup>86</sup> But as earlier commentators rightly deduced, it derived from his association with the church of the Theotokos *ta Kyrou*, now the Kalenderhane Camii.<sup>87</sup> If Geometres ended his days as a monk, which is far from

<sup>81</sup> Poem 11 (*Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, pp. 275–276); K 109 (?), 127. One should note, too, that the imperial court went on boat trips, with the emperor and his chief ministers in one galley and a select company of senators in another: Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *De administrando imperio*, (eds) G. Moravcsik and R.J.H. Jenkins (Washington, D.C., 1967), §51. It is said that Leo VI instituted the second galley because he 'always liked to share his pleasure' (l. 24) with the senators – was entertainment laid on?

<sup>82</sup> AP XIa, title: Τὸ συμποτικὸν εἶδος ἐκ σκωμμάτων σύγκειται καὶ συμβουλῆς τῶν παλαιῶν αἰεὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀποσχεδιάζοντων.

<sup>83</sup> See Paul Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), pp. 199–200, pp. 227–229, pp. 239–241; Oikonomides, 'Life and Society', pp. 5–6.

<sup>84</sup> See above.

<sup>85</sup> Ioannes Sajdak, 'Spicilegium Geometreum II', *Eos*, 33 (1930–1931): pp. 530–531.

<sup>86</sup> Marc D. Lauxtermann, 'John Geometres – Poet and Soldier', *Byz.*, 68 (1998): pp. 356–380; van Opstall, *Poèmes*, pp. 13–14.

<sup>87</sup> He describes his house as being near the Mesomphalon of the city, which lay near the church of *ta Kyrou*: see Albrecht Berger, *Untersuchungen zu den Patria Konstantinupoleos* (Bonn, 1988), pp. 468–470. For the identification of the church with the Kalenderhane, see Cecil L. Striker and Y. Doğan Kuban (eds), *Kalenderhane in Istanbul. The Buildings* (Mainz, 1997), with the review by Cyril Mango in *BZ*, 91 (1998): pp. 586–590.

clear,<sup>88</sup> we do not know what monastic community he entered. What is clear is that the church of *ta Kyrou* near which he lived, and about which he wrote (poem 142), is always referred to simply as a church, without any mention of a monastery, at least before the fourteenth century. The Kyriotai among whom Geometres' contemporary, the layman Nikephoros Ouranos, includes himself and Ioannes, the *ostiarios* of the imperial palace, were evidently a group of people who had some other association with the church.<sup>89</sup> They may have been parishioners, or they may have formed a confraternity devoted to the icon of the Virgin Kyriotissa. That is another story, but one rich in implications for the context in which Ioannes Geometres was producing his poetry.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> The evidence of this poem (nr. 289, l. 12–14), where he writes of having undergone some kind of initiation is too vague to be conclusive. The poem where he calls himself Kyriotes (poem 92, *Anecdota graeca*, Cramer, p. 297) hardly reveals a monastic vocation, being a jocular improvisation in praise of wine: see above.

<sup>89</sup> Jean Darrouzès (ed.), *Épistoliers byzantins du X<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1960), p. 238. The assumption that the Kyriotai were a monastic community began with Darrouzès, though there is nothing to justify it in the text.

<sup>90</sup> I deal with this subject more fully in a forthcoming article 'John Geometres, the church of *ta Kyrou*, and the Kyriotai' in T. Shawcross and I. Toth (eds), *Reading Byzantium* (Festschrift for Elizabeth Jeffreys, forthcoming from Cambridge University Press).

# Chapter 3

## Gifts of Words:

### The Discourse of Gift-giving in Eleventh-century Byzantine Poetry

Floris Bernard

In a panegyric for the emperor Constantine Monomachos, Michael Psellos draws the attention of the emperor to the various branches of learning:

*Philosophy, jurisprudence and the sophistic art, the first from heaven, the others from more earthly spheres, have now, as by agreement, come together for you, not to judge your deeds or to criticize them – for who is more correct than the rule itself? – but to see and admire them, and to bring words as a gift for the man who has elevated them.*<sup>1</sup>

Psellos stresses that intellectual pursuits will not run counter to the interests of the emperor: they will not bring criticism, only admiration. In the scenario that he evokes, all the emperor has to do in support of learning is to accept the gifts that are brought to him spontaneously. It has to be noted that while the three branches of learning are quite divergent (with philosophy significantly taking the lead part) their gifts are only offered to the emperor in the form of ‘words’, implying that the literary form is the most convenient way to communicate learning.

This all sounds attractive and quite harmless. But at the same time, both parties more or less consciously understand that Psellos advances here a demand for material support for the benefit of intellectuals and their learning and teaching. Not without purpose, Psellos adds that the ‘gifts of words’ are intended for ‘the man who has elevated them’. He advances the ideal of a cultivated emperor who partakes in the glory that learning can provide. As such, he is expected to appreciate this admiration, even to the degree that he ‘elevates’ it; in other words, that he provides adequate support to make the creation of these ‘gifts of words’ possible. The material price for this glory is not mentioned, but implicitly understood.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*, ed. G.T. Dennis (Stuttgart, 1994), or. 1, l. 22–28: φιλοσοφία δὲ καὶ νομοθετικὴ καὶ ἡ σοφιστικὴ τέχνη, ἡ μὲν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, αἱ δ’ ἐκ περιπεζίων σφαιρῶν, ὥσπερ ἀπὸ συνθήματος εἰς ταῦτόν σοι ἤκασι νῦν, οὐχ ὥστε κρίνειν ἢ δοκιμᾶζειν τὰ σά – τίς γὰρ τοῦ κανόνος εὐθύτερος; – ἀλλ’ ἰδεῖν καὶ θαυμάσαι, καὶ τοὺς λόγους δωροφορῆσαι τῷ τούτους ὑψώσαντι.

In this paper, I shall take a closer look at some of these 'gifts of words', explore the various ways in which poetry helped to give these gifts a form, and try to describe some of the implicit overtones that emerge when a poem presents itself or something else as a 'gift'. I will approach the concept of 'gifts of words' as a discursive construction, and not necessarily as the reflection of a historical cultural practice.

## The Discourse of Gift-giving

Gift-giving is indeed a special kind of economic exchange, as both parties pretend that it is, in fact, not economic.<sup>2</sup> Both giver and receiver let it be understood that the gift is a spontaneous, gratuitous present and does not need to be reciprocated. However, in reality, it is very clear that both parties tacitly, or even unconsciously, agree that it does need to be reciprocated. This phenomenon of disguise has been referred to by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu as 'méconnaissance', that is, the willing failure to recognize openly that material rewards are expected.<sup>3</sup> It is this tension between implicit material interests and professed disinterestedness that will inform my readings of some poems.

Some gifts can be real and tangible, others have a more symbolic, and thus more fluid value. This value is created and measured by the common presuppositions of the cultural context in which it takes place. With reference to the literary gift, we can observe that the eleventh century is generally considered a period when literature regained its former prestige;<sup>4</sup> the fragment of Psellos we quoted at the beginning may testify to this impression of a general restoration of learning. A new class of young, talented people flocked to the many schools of the capital, received education in literature, and was eager to try to turn this acquired knowledge into opportunities for social networking and career building.<sup>5</sup> Literature strengthened the social cohesion of this newly formed class, providing a common background to set themselves off from other social strata. As I will argue, the giving of literature as a gift is part of this process of capitalizing on these acquired skills.

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<sup>2</sup> On gift-giving as an anthropological phenomenon, see the seminal work of Marcel Mauss, 'Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques', *L'année sociologique*, 1 (1925): pp. 30–186. Recent studies on gift exchange in Byzantium include Anthony Cutler, 'Significant Gifts: Patterns of Exchange in Late Antique, Byzantine, and Early Islamic Diplomacy', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 38 (2008): pp. 79–101 and Cecily J. Hilsdale, 'Constructing a Byzantine *Augusta*: A Greek Book for a French Bride', *Art Bulletin*, 87/3 (2005): pp. 458–483.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Le sens pratique* (Paris, 1980), pp. 191–194. For a critique on this self-interested aspect, Mark Osteen, 'Questions of the Gift. Introduction', in Mark Osteen (ed.), *The Question of the Gift* (London/New York, 2002), pp. 1–41, here pp. 23–26.

<sup>4</sup> An influential expression of this view is to be found in Paul Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), p. 195.

<sup>5</sup> For these social shifts, see Hélène Ahrweiler, 'Recherches sur la société byzantine au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle: nouvelles hiérarchies et nouvelles solidarités', *TM*, 6 (1976): pp. 99–124.

A precondition for this is the creation of a discourse that convincingly proposes the idea that literature, as a symbolic and immaterial gift, can be exchanged for other, tangible goods. Several works of Michael Psellos, who was arguably a pivotal figure in the integration of learning in society, contribute to the propagation of this discourse. Psellos frequently presents his orations as remunerations for other services. He describes the encomium for his friend Ioannes Mauropous as a 'debt that has been paid off',<sup>6</sup> and the encomium for his mother as something 'which I give as a fair debt redemption to nature, and which I bring in as a fitting contribution to her virtue'.<sup>7</sup> The fiscal vocabulary in this last example is striking, with words as *ὄφλημα* (debt) and the very technical term *συνεισφορά* ('joint contribution'). This demonstrates to what degree the Byzantines of this period (and particularly Psellos) were willing to consider literature as an element in the dynamics of social services.

Moreover, Psellos emphatically presents literature as part of a direct exchange of commodities. In a letter to a friend who gives him a horse, he proposes that his friend accept the letter as a gift in exchange for the horse, even though the letter is worth much more: 'It would really be absurd ... if I would want to exchange a letter (*λόγος*) for a horse (*ἄλογον*)'.<sup>8</sup> Exploiting the polysemy of the words *ἄλογον* (horse, but also 'matter' in a philosophical sense) and *λόγος* (this letter, but also 'reason'), Psellos is able to represent his letter as a gracious, immaterial gift, more valuable than any material asset, at least for those people who appreciate the hidden charms of it.<sup>9</sup>

As a matter of fact, Psellos often describes such an exchange in his letters: he proposes to give *logoi*, and he expects deeds in return. In a letter to an unknown acquaintance, he asks him to do a favour, probably related to one of the monasteries that fell under Psellos' care:<sup>10</sup>

*So, let us in a certain way requite each other, and be reciprocally affected, me by giving words, you by giving me back deeds ... I have opened up with my mouth the sources of words in your favour, and you gush over me with your benevolence in a still greater stream, and by both, the bowl of friendship will become filled.*

<sup>6</sup> Psellos, *Orationes Panegyricae*, or. 17, l. 853: ὡς χρέος ἐκτετισμένον.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Psellos, *Encomium in matrem*, ed. U. Criscuolo (Naples, 1989), p. 85: τῇ φύσει τὸ δίκαιον ἀποδίδωμι ὄφλημα καὶ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν πρέπουσαν εἰσάγω συνεισφοράν.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Psellos, letter 171, ed. K. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη* (5 vols, Venice/Paris, 1876), vol. 5, pp. 434–438. The Greek text of the first sentence runs: Ἄλογον ὡς ἀληθῶς, σεβασμωτάτῃ μοι κεφαλῇ Ἰασίτῃ, εἰ λόγου βουλοίμην ἀνταλλάττεσθαι ἄλογον.

<sup>9</sup> On the discourse of exchange in this letter, see Floris Bernard, 'Exchanging *Logoi* for *Aloga*: Cultural and Material Capital in a Letter of Michael Psellos', *BMGS*, 35.2 (2011): pp. 134–148.

<sup>10</sup> The letter is edited in Paul Gautier, 'Quelques lettres de Psellos inédites ou déjà éditées', *REB*, 44 (1986): pp. 111–197 (letter 31). Text: p. 184, l. 8–10 and p. 185, l. 15–17: Τρόπον οὖν τινα ἀντιδρῶμεν ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀντιπάσχομεν, ἐγὼ μὲν λόγους διδούς, σὺ δὲ ἔργα ἀντιδιδούς ... Ἐγὼ μὲν πρὸς τὰς ὑπὲρ σοῦ τῶν λόγων πηγὰς ἀνεστόμωμαι, σὺ δὲ ἀνθυπερβλύζεις τὸ εὐγνωμονεῖν πλεῖονι βέεματι, καὶ γίνεται παρ' ἀλλήλοις πλήρης ὁ τῆς φιλίας κρατῆρ.

Psellos saw no obstacle in proposing that gifts of words (in this fragment clearly understood to induce social promotion) imply gifts of another, more pragmatic, kind. In the world of Psellos' letter corpus, words had their own special place in the intricate traffic of services and goods.

### Poetic Gifts and Material Rewards

The rhetoric of 'words in exchange for things' comes to the surface again in poems of the period. And 'things' can also be cucumbers: poem 105 of Christophoros Mitylenaios is a poem about a cucumber-bed kept in a vineyard.<sup>11</sup> The poem is severely damaged; from the initial part, we can only infer that the poet addresses the vineyard keeper and asks for some of his cucumbers. The poet also mentions a short work that seems to be exchanged for the skills of the vineyard keeper (v. 7: σου τήν τέχνην βραχεῖ λόγῳ), and a payment coming from encomia (v. 9: μισθὸν ἐξ ἐγκωμίων). The subsequent verses indeed appear as an encomium: the gardener is praised for his efforts to keep the vineyard (and the cucumbers) free from robbers and vermin. From verse 52, just after stating that he will remember the gardener until his death, Christophoros repeats his demand:

πρὸ τοῦ θανεῖν δὲ ζῶντί μοι νῦν εἰσέτι  
ἐκ τοῦδε τοῦ σοῦ σικυηλάτου δίδου·  
ἤδη γὰρ οἶδα τῶν ἐπαίνων σοι κόρον,  
οὕς ἀντὶ μισθοῦ τῶν ὀπωρῶν εἰσφέρω·

*But before I die, give me now something  
of this cucumber-bed of yours while I still live;  
for I realize that by now, you have enough of the encomia  
that I contribute in return for the recompense of your fruits.*

It is clear from these lines that Christophoros refers to this very poem when he mentions 'the encomia', since he represents the gardener becoming wary of his praises, which have by now continued for fifty verses. Consequently, the encomia and the 'short writing' mentioned in the beginning, which are said to induce an exchange, need to be understood as this poem itself.

The word μισθός, mentioned at least twice in relation to this very poem (verses 9 and 55), unmistakably refers to a monetary payment. The mercantile aspect of this exchange is also evident from the fact that this 'poetic currency' can be used cumulatively: the

<sup>11</sup> About this poem, see also C. Crimi et al., *Cristoforo di Mitilene, Canzoniere* (Catania, 1983), pp. 143–144 (A. Milazzo). In contrast to this interpretation, I do not think that the speaking voice in the poem is a fortuitous passer-by. Rather, it is (the persona of) the poet himself. And his words are not to be taken as a complaint about his avaricious nature, but as an element of genuine praise for the vineyard keeper defending his garden against robbers.

poem closes with the promise that if the cucumbers please him, Christophoros will write more praises.

Of course, the tone here is playful, and we should not be too quick to posit a mechanical barter economy where verses are sold for cucumbers – in fact, this is exactly what the discourse of gift-giving bypasses. This example is meant to indicate merely that the rhetoric of ‘words for things’ existed and found currency. Moreover, the poem can serve as a demonstration of the encomiastic power of a literary gift: in a real *tour de force*, Christophoros succeeds in giving the vineyard keeper the dimensions of a hero and a martyr. Notwithstanding the playfulness of the argument, I would therefore suggest that there was some real value inherent in a literary service like this; that is, the power to give (or detract from) social renown and prestige.

In a second example, the tone is less playful and the stakes are higher. Poem 16 by Michael Psellos was very probably written for the emperor Michael IV, when Psellos was still a young man looking for a job opportunity in the bureaucratic system of the capital.<sup>12</sup>

Ἐμοί, κραταιὲ φωσφόρε στεφηφόρε,  
μέλημα καὶ σπούδασμα καὶ βίος λόγοι,  
ἔξ ὧν φανῆναι καὶ προκόψειν ἐλπίσας  
πάντων κατεφρόνησα καὶ ζῆν εἰλόμην  
τέως ταπεινὸν καὶ κεκρυμμένον βίον,  
πόνοις ὁμιλῶν καὶ σοφῶν βίβλοις μόνον. 5

*For me, mighty and torch-bearing emperor,  
learning (logoi) is my care, my concern, my life.  
It is from learning that I hope to be conspicuous and successful.  
Therefore I neglected all other things and chose until now  
to lead a humble and concealed life, 5  
having contact only with the toils and the books of scholars.*

In the middle of the poem, Psellos states that he wants to come to the emperor’s assistance in these difficult times. The poem closes with a rather explicit request (vv. 15–17):

δέδεξο λοιπὸν οἰκέτου δῶρον λόγον· 15  
σὺ δ’ ἀντιδοίης τὴν κατ’ ἀξίαν δόσιν  
τοῖς σοῖς με πάντως συμβάλων νοταρίοις.

*So, accept now this poem as a gift from a servant;  
but you, may you give me a reward of equal value 15  
by recruiting me as one of your secretaries.*

<sup>12</sup> W 16.

This poem is emphatically identified as a gift (v. 15: δῶρον) consisting of a λόγος. This is immediately connected with a direct plea to reward this gift with a job as a secretary. Psellos makes clear that the reward must be something of equal value (v. 16: τὴν κατ' ἀξίαν δόσιν). This reward is also described as a counter-gift (v. 16: δόσις) that needs to be 'given in return' (ἀντιδοίης). Here, Psellos points to the inherent ethics of gift-giving; that is, that every gift supposes a counter-gift, with the expectation that a lasting gift exchange will arise. The expectations about the crude economic mechanics of gift exchange are stated here in an unusually explicit manner. It should be noted that Psellos' gift worked: he did obtain a position as a secretary in the administration of Michael IV, as we learn from his *Chronographia*.<sup>13</sup>

However bluntly this poem may express its expectations, it also reveals some presuppositions that are only applicable to 'gifts of words'. In the first part of the poem, Psellos emphasizes his dedication to intellectual values. With the toils he spent on the *logoi*, he hoped to be conspicuous and to be successful. This clearly reflects the career possibilities that could be gained by exhibiting competences in learning. These competences and skills are represented here as the result of ascetic-like devotion; indeed, they are a hard-earned acquisition, because one has to lead a laborious, hidden life to master them. Unlike other assets, intellectual assets cannot manifest themselves directly: an amount of investment, in terms of time and in terms of social isolation, is needed before one is able to play out these assets. These investments are not evident, so they surely had to be emphasized. This poem itself then, also called a *logos* (l. 14), is a token of these investments, and provides ample proof that Psellos mastered all the intellectual competences needed for a responsible position.

In the case of this poem or Christophoros' cucumber-poem, we do not need to think that poet and recipient seriously believed that the poem in itself sufficed as a means of payment in return for cucumbers or a post as a secretary: other factors will probably have played a greater role. But I would argue that the presentation of the transaction as a poetic gift of words creates a particularly graceful aspect, and permits both participants to think of it not as an economic transaction, but as an act of aesthetic admiration. The rhetoric of 'gifts of words' only works because the recipients are supposed to attach an extraordinary value to the beauty of words and to the amount of intellectual energy and talent that is needed to achieve that beauty. The poems themselves are the place where the social or economic exchange finds an adequate and refined expression.

<sup>13</sup> See Psellos, *Chronographia*, book V, §27.



## Dedicating Gifts: Poetry as a Paratext in Mauropous

Poetry not only serves to be presented as a gift; it also serves to present other things as a gift. Poem 55 of Ioannes Mauropous in fact combines both.<sup>14</sup> The poem is dedicated to Zoe and Theodora, the two nominal empresses during the reign of Konstantinos Monomachos. The poem, as printed in the modern edition, begins with these two verses:<sup>15</sup>

Δισσαῖς ἀνάσσαις αὐταδέλφαις Αὐγούσταις  
δῶρημα κοινὸν ἐξ ἐνὸς δούλου τόδε.

*To the two sisters Augustae and mistresses,  
this shared gift from one servant.*

In *Vat. Gr.* 676, the manuscript that preserves the works of Mauropous and reflects faithfully the way the poet wanted his works to appear,<sup>16</sup> we see that these two lines are written in an epigraphic majuscule, making them stand out from the rest of the poem (fol. 26<sup>v</sup>). Normally, this eye-catching font is only used for titles and, in particular, for accompanying ‘book epigrams.’<sup>17</sup> Its use at this point makes clear that these two lines need to be seen as a *paratext*; that is, a text that intends to present the main text and steer the presuppositions with which the reader embarks on reading the main text.<sup>18</sup>

As such, this poem (let us call it 55a) presents the poem proper (55b) as a gift. Moreover, a separate use of 55a only makes sense if we suppose that the poem as a whole was, just as other dedicated objects, offered to its patrons physically. Here we can imagine poem 55b offered in the form of a small roll, with 55a as an elegant distich attached to it in some way or another. This physical aspect of the ‘gift of words’ is important to keep in mind.

We see here, in contrast to the previously discussed poems, that gift and dedication are neatly separated from each other. The dedication takes the form of an epigram; that is, a text that provides a framework of how to understand the gift proper, by stating giver, receiver, and often also the expectations that underlie the giving of the gift. This might imply that the poetic gift does not always refer to itself explicitly as a gift, while

<sup>14</sup> On the circumstances of delivery of this poem, see also Floris Bernard, ‘The Circulation of Poetry in 11th-Century Byzantium’, in Savvas Neocleous (ed.), *Sailing to Byzantium. Papers from the First and Second Postgraduate Forums in Byzantine Studies. Trinity College, Dublin, 16–17 April 2007 and 15–16 May 2008* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2009), pp. 145–160.

<sup>15</sup> L 55.1–2.

<sup>16</sup> On Mauropous’ poetry collection, see Marc Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 2003), pp. 62–65.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Herbert Hunger, ‘Minuskel und Auszeichnungsschriften im 10.-12. Jahrhundert’, in Jean Glénisson, Jacques Bompaigne and Jean Irigoin (eds), *La paléographie grecque et byzantine* (Paris, 1972), pp. 201–220.

<sup>18</sup> The notion of *paratext* has been propagated by Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris, 1987).

many poems did function in such a way. Poem 55b is an example: when we take away the epigram 55a, there is no explicit indication to be found that it was intended as a gift.

The function of a poem as the presentation of the gift, rather than the gift itself, emerges more clearly in poem 27 of Mauropous. It is indicated in the title as a πρόγραμμα for Mauropous' oration for the Dormition of the Theotokos (or. 183), and it is imbedded in a small series of *programmata* in the collection (28–31). The word πρόγραμμα can be taken quite literally: the poetic dedicatory inscription might have been physically affixed before the main text as it appeared in the manuscript. In contrast to an ἐπίγραμμα, it was written *before* the dedicated object instead of *on* it, but all the same it functioned as a *paratext*, and would provide a visually marked indication of the circumstances of the gift.<sup>19</sup>

In the *programma*, Mauropous presents the oration as a garland for the Theotokos, and asks her to allow him to crown her with it; but he adds the following precaution (L 27.24–29):

εἰ δ' οὖν, τὸ δῶρον δεξιᾶς σῆς ἄξιον,  
αὐτὴ τε σαυτὴν εὐπρεπῶς τούτῳ στέφε-  
ῃ μᾶλλον εὐπρέπειαν αὐτὴ τῷ στέφει  
προσψαύσεως σῆς ἄξιουμένῳ δίδου.  
ἡμᾶς δὲ τοὺς λόγοις σε τιμώντας μόνοις  
ἔργοις σὺ πάντως ἀντιτίμησον πλέον.

*If not, [sc. if I cannot crown you myself] deem this gift worthy of your right hand,  
and crown yourself with it, in dignity.  
Or rather, attribute dignity to this garland  
by deeming it worthy of your touch.  
As for us, who have revered you with words only,  
reward us at any rate more, with deeds.*

The poem concludes (vv. 34–36):

ταύτην ἀμοιβὴν τοῦ πόθου καὶ τοῦ λόγου  
λάβοιμεν ἐκ σοῦ, καὶ τὸ τῆς δόξης στέφος,  
κἂν ταῦτα μείζον ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐλπίσαι.

*May we receive from you that reward for our desire and our words,  
and also the wreath of renown,  
even if hoping this lies beyond our limits.*

<sup>19</sup> For the mutually complementary meanings of ἐπίγραμμα and πρόγραμμα, see also Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, p. 30.

The poet is keen to underline the spiritual nature of the exchange that takes place here. All the poet has to offer are his words and his well-intended feelings. The word *pothos* (translated as 'desire') is important here: it refers to the intention and the personal devotion that motivate the gift, in contrast to its intrinsic, 'real' value. Elsewhere in the poem, Maupous states that it is not this garland of words that is worthy of the Theotokos, but the *pothos* that underlies the act of giving, and that gives strength to this oration (vv. 13–16). The *pothos* conceals still more of the economic nature of the exchange, as it is presented as an act inspired by spontaneous intentions. This does not prevent the poet from expressing the recognizable motif of claiming deeds in exchange for words (v. 28).

The fact that the gift consists of words, lifts the gift exchange up to a more prestigious level. It is rather with a defiant tone that Maupous asserts that his gift consists of 'only words' (v. 28): every suggestion of a material offering is avoided. In poem 28, a *programma* to an oration for the commemoration of the angels (or. 177), this aspect is elaborated to a further degree: the argumentation goes that even if Maupous were able to give something of material value, he would still only give a gift with the appropriate intentions (v. 5: *σὺν προθυμίᾳ*), and since he feels only love for words and learning (vv. 7–9), he can only offer a gift consisting of words. We see in both poems how Maupous underlines the spiritual quality of his gift, while at the same time asserting himself as a devotee of intellectual values.

It must be noted that the gift-giving is performed on the level of a religious relationship. In fact, the discourse of gift exchange was very appropriate for the expression of the relationship between man and God: the idea of *ἀντιδωσις* or *ἀμοιβή*, the reward that one receives in the life hereafter for the good deeds done on Earth, is seminal to Byzantine religious thinking.

Another important aspect of gift-giving that is revealed in poem 27, is Maupous' claim that the Theotokos is able to bestow dignity on the gift and the giver merely by accepting the gift. The slightest touch of her hand (v. 27: *προσψαύσεως*) will confer glory on the gift and its donor. What Maupous hopes for, as he says in the second to last line (v. 35), is 'the wreath of renown'. I am convinced that this aspect can be extrapolated to gifts on a more mundane level: if a gift is accepted by a recipient who holds a higher hierarchical position, this acceptance aggrandizes the giver as well, because his or her gift was deemed worthy of the attention of the mighty. The request for renown (v. 35: *δόξα*) thus might have repercussions that extend into the context of the initial readers and hearers of the poem. Maupous' oration was, we may presume, read out in a public place before many important officials. Therefore, the wish for renown is at the same time the wish for an appreciative reception of the oration by the contemporary (and maybe also subsequent) hearers (and readers).

## Psellos and Strategies of Giving

This aspect of dignity attributed to the donor of the gift if his or her humble present is accepted, recurs in other poems. The long didactic poems of Michael Psellos are, with one exception, dedicated to emperors. These dedications are to be found in the lemmata above the poems in the manuscripts, but the name of the dedicatee differs from manuscript to manuscript.

Accordingly, poem 1, on the inscriptions of the psalms, bears a dedication to Monomachos in the titles of some manuscripts and to Michael Doukas in others. As Westerink observes, it is probable that Psellos dedicated the same poem to different emperors: he used the same text, but attached a new dedication for the new emperor.<sup>20</sup> But there is more: the *lemmata* in a third group of manuscripts of poem 1 do not mention a dedication to an emperor at all.<sup>21</sup> The text in these manuscripts also differs substantially from the text in the other manuscripts: whenever the main text has an address to the emperor (for example, v. 1: *δέσποτά μου*), this group of manuscripts supplants this with a general address, apparently to a group of students (in this example: *φιλόλογοι*). Moreover, these manuscripts leave out the last portion of the text (from v. 292 to the end). Significantly, this portion is an epilogue to the main text, where the poet addresses the emperor (whoever that was) personally, and also clearly dedicates the poem as a gift: 'I have summarized this for you by way of introduction, my lord, and now I offer it to you as a proper gift, crown-bearer.'<sup>22</sup>

It might be interesting to note that the group of manuscripts that leave out all mention to any emperor agree in their deviant readings with the oldest extant fragment that is transmitted; that is, in the *Bodl. Clarke 15*,<sup>23</sup> which was written in 1078 while Psellos was still alive.<sup>24</sup> This fragment also ends just before the final dedicatory verses. The evidence from the *Bodl. Clarke 15* may confirm that the manuscripts that do not include a dedication reflect an older version of Psellos' poem, or at any rate, a version nevertheless authored by Psellos.

<sup>20</sup> Leendert G. Westerink, *Michael Psellus. Poemata* (Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1992), p. 1. See also the discussion by Hörandner elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>21</sup> These are *Vat. Pal. gr.* 383, *Athen.* 799, *Mosqu. gr.* 388, and *Boston. Houghton gr.* 3. The last of these, however, exhibits some deviant readings with regard to the other three. Westerink did not follow this group of manuscripts for the establishment of his text.

<sup>22</sup> W 1.292–293: Ταῦτ' εἰσαγωγικώτερον, ἀνάξ, σοὶ συνοψίσας | δῶρόν σοι προσαγήνοχα οἰκεῖον, στεφνήδωρε.

<sup>23</sup> The fragment in the *Bodl. Clarke 15*, unnoticed by Westerink, is to be found on fol. 1<sup>r</sup>–2<sup>v</sup>, and transmits verses 262 to 291. See Thomas Gaisford, *Catalogus sive notitia manuscriptorum qui a cel. E.D. Clarke comparati in bibliotheca Bodleiana adservantur* (Oxford, 1812), pp. 57–58, where Psellos' authorship is ignored. For this manuscript, see the contribution of Marc Lauxtermann in this volume. I am grateful to Niels Gaul for drawing my attention to this manuscript.

<sup>24</sup> Psellos at any rate died after 1076, possibly as late as 1092; see Apostolos Karpozelos, 'When did Michael Psellus die?', *BZ*, 96 (2003): pp. 671–677.

It is therefore probable that poem 1 existed initially as a separate text that did not contain any reference or dedication to an emperor. This initial state is reflected in a branch of manuscripts that also comprises the oldest preserved fragment (the one from the Clarke manuscript).<sup>25</sup> The addresses to a wider public of *philologoi* may indicate that Psellos used the poem in his capacity as a teacher at a private school, which makes it in this respect comparable to the didactic poems of Niketas of Herakleia, some of which are obviously directed to a group of pupils.<sup>26</sup> But when Psellos later got in contact with the emperor, he would have considered it appropriate to wrap this poem as a gift by adding a separate dedication at the end of the poem and inserting an address to the emperor in the text itself. The mere feat of dedicating such a poem to the emperor, and having it accepted, would have enhanced the reputation and prestige of Psellos as a teacher and a figure with influence at court. In this case then, the operation of turning a poem into a gift poem is carried out by providing an epilogue, the exact counterpart of a *programma*.

### Books as Gifts

Whatever the spiritual connotations of the literary gift, it may have also entailed a tangible aspect. As we have seen with regard to poem 55, the gift of words was also offered 'in hard copy'. The literary gift is therefore able to combine the immateriality of words with the tangible value of its written form, eminently so in the most valuable literary gift: the book. Books were a frequent gift in Byzantium and, as can be expected, many of these books contain an epigram at the beginning or at the end that dedicates the book.<sup>27</sup> I will single out one of them.

The famous manuscript *Paris. Coisl.* 79 contains excerpts from homilies of Ioannes Chrysostomos and displays several miniatures at the beginning of the manuscript, accompanied by epigrams.<sup>28</sup> One of these miniatures (on f. 2bis, *olim* 1r) shows a monk pointing with a staff to the book placed on the lectern. This monk, who is identified as Sabbas by an inscription above his head, is clearly represented as the donor of the book. The figure on his right, an emperor sitting on a throne, is identified by an inscription as Nikephoros Botaneiates. However, there are indications that the book was first intended to be given to Michael Doukas, and underwent some modifications upon the ascent to the throne of Nikephoros and his marriage to Maria of Alania.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, it has been

<sup>25</sup> I am grateful for the advice of Prof. Wolfram Hörandner, with whom I discussed this possibility at the conference.

<sup>26</sup> See the contribution of Wolfram Hörandner in this volume. See also Jean Schneider, 'La poésie didactique à Byzance: Nicétas d'Héraclée', *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, 58 (1999): pp. 388–423, esp. pp. 416–423.

<sup>27</sup> This is testified by the many examples that are to be found in the database of book epigrams compiled by Klaas Bentein; see the contribution of Demoen and Bentein in this volume.

<sup>28</sup> On these epigrams, see also the contribution of Anneliese Paul in this volume.

<sup>29</sup> So Joannis Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 112–118.

suggested that Sabbas added the epigrams and adapted the miniatures after the book had been produced by someone else.<sup>30</sup> This scenario makes clear that the initiative for the creation of this work of art did not come from the emperor, but from courtiers who wanted to do him a favour.<sup>31</sup>

Above the miniature mentioned, we find the following epigram:<sup>32</sup>

ὑψους ἀνάκτων εὐκλεῆς σκηπτουχία  
ταῖς ἡδοναῖς θέλχθητι ταῖς ἐκ τῶν λόγων  
καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τέρφθητι καὶ χαίρων κρότει  
σοῖς οἰκέταις βράβευε χεῖρα πλουσίαν.

*Oh you famous sceptre-bearer of the height of rulers,  
be charmed by the delights from words,  
rejoice at heart, applaud gladly,  
and reward your servants with a generous hand.*

In this case, explicit mention of donor and recipient was not necessary, since the miniature provided those identifications. The epigram complements the image, stating the expectations implied with the gift. The words ‘generous hand’ (χεῖρα πλουσίαν) do not leave much room for imagination: our poet expects some financial recompense for his services. Again, this poem distances itself from the main text by means of its physical outlook: the epigraphic style of the majuscule letter highlights its use as a *paratext*.

It has to be noted that while this book in itself was a precious, even sumptuous gift, the pleasure that the gift can bring is here said to be provoked by words. The reward that is projected is therefore a logical consequence of the admiration that these words provoke, not a remuneration of the material value of the book.

## Exquisite Gifts

In many of the foregoing examples, the use of poetry can be explained from the tradition of the epigram.<sup>33</sup> The poetic outlook of these epigrams helped to recognize them as *paratexts*, and, applied to gifts, it made sure that they were perceived as the dedication of the gift. As such, these epigrams naturally belong to the long tradition of the genre of the dedicatory epigram, of which the conventional structures are tailored to actual needs.

However, the use of poetry in connection with gifts may have another motivation that is harder to pin down: poetry also adds a particular touch to a gift, whether the gift

<sup>30</sup> Carmen-Laura Dumitrescu, ‘Remarques en marge du Coislin 79: Les trois eunuques et le problème du donateur’, *Byz*, 57 (1987): pp. 32–45.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> The poem is edited in Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 108.

<sup>33</sup> See also the ‘epigrammatic habit’ described by Paul Magdalino elsewhere in this volume.

itself is poetic or not. This particular touch is one of a refined taste, a sense of common celebration that only a few could appreciate.

This common celebration of gifts finds otherwise its foremost literary expression in epistolography: letters express gratitude for received gifts, or accompany gifts sent to a friend. In fact, quite a few poems by Christophoros are perfectly comparable with these kinds of letters. Poem 43 thanks his friend Niketas Synadenos for the gift of bandages for his sore feet. Poem 45 accompanies a gift of fresh jars (with aromatic wine?)<sup>34</sup> for a friend in summertime; also here, the poet proclaims the *pothos* with which the gift is given. Poem 64 accompanies a book (and perhaps more – the poem is greatly damaged) given to *protopapas* Ioannes. Poems 66 and 67 accompany the gift of a golden apple for a certain Eudokia, written on behalf of a friend. Poems 87 and 88 reject in a playful sophistic manner first a gift of grapes and then a gift of figs from a friend. Poem 94 thanks a certain Leo for the *mesisklia* he has sent;<sup>35</sup> from a fragmentary line, we can infer that Christophoros thanks Leon for the affection (K 94.4: *στοργή*) he has shown with this gift. Poem 110 is coupled with some wine sent to a certain Kosmas. Poem 117 is sent along with some perfume of roses to the monk Athanasios, suggesting that Athanasios might pass the gift along to other friends.

These poems, except maybe for the enigmatic pair 66 and 67, are conceived as letters that accompany or respond to gifts sent from afar: the titles frequently use the verb ‘send’ (*ἀποστέλλω* or *πέμπω*) in reference to the gifts, although the poems themselves designate them more expressly as ‘gifts’ (*δῶρον*: K 45.1, K 117.1, *δόςις*: K 43.6). The poems display the same conventional motives as letters written to thank people for gifts, such as the joy of receiving (see K 45.3: *σὺν ἡδονῇ ... δέξει καρδίας*), and *ad hoc* explanations of the hidden meaning of gifts (so 43, 87, 88, and possibly implied in K 64.2 *κεκρυμμένην*).

However, two ‘gift poems’ join the discourse of ‘gifts of words’ with these conventions of friendly, elegant gift exchanges, by focusing on the poem as an autonomous gift. Poems 115 and 124 are both written (perhaps not by accident) on the occasion of popular celebrations. These are the *broumalion*, celebrated in November, and the *kalandai*, the first days of the year.<sup>36</sup> Both celebrations (which were officially condemned) included exuberant merrymaking and masquerades. They were also appropriate moments to exchange gifts.

Poem 124 is written on the occasion of the *kalandai*. The poem is badly damaged: only the even-numbered verses are extant. From its fragmented title, we can only conclude that it was addressed to a friend on this festive first day of the year. In verse 2, Christophoros refers to ‘salutations for friends’ (*δεξιώσεις πρὸς φίλους*). In verse 6, he unveils the gift he is to present to his friend. ‘Here you are, I give you these words as a gift’ (*ἰδοὺ δίδωμι τοῦσδε δῶρα τούς λόγους*), and in verse 8, he specifies, ‘I create rhythms of words with my writing pen’ (*γραφῆς καλᾶμω ῥημάτων τελῶ κρότους*). In the next readable verse, he asks his friend to accept these words on this festive day of the *kalandai*

<sup>34</sup> For the question of the exact content of the gift, see Crimi, *Canzoniere*, pp. 89–90.

<sup>35</sup> It is not known what these *μεσίσκλια* are, cf. LBG, s.v. ‘*μεσίσκλια*’: ‘eine Speise?’.

<sup>36</sup> For these feasts, see ODB, s.v. ‘Broumalion’ and ‘Calends’. See also poem 18 of Psellos, written on the occasion of the *kalandai*.



(K 124.10: ἐν τῇ καλανδῶν προσδέχου νουμηνία), and he concludes his poem by stating that nothing in life is better than this gift: ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἔχει τὶ βέλτιον τούτου βίος.

Words are the kind of gift Christophoros declares he is giving. We can assume that the gift in question is in fact this very poem. The word κρότος (K 124.8) may refer to the beating rhythm of verse,<sup>37</sup> and the words τούσδε τοὺς λόγους (K 124.6) may point to this very poem and not to another piece of literature, as Crimi suggests;<sup>38</sup> this may be concluded from the present tense of τελῶ κρότους (K 124.8). In any event, the proud declaration of Christophoros that he gives verse as a gift, while he was conscious that others gave material presents at this festive occasion, indicates the exquisiteness that poetry maintains with respect to other forms of gifts. There might also have been (perhaps more explicitly so in the lines that are now lost) an *antithesis* between the rattling and clapping by celebrants of the *kalandai*, and the poetic rhythm that Christophoros creates, both designated with the word κρότος. In this case, the sound of poetic rhythm is, of course, considered superior.

The same argument, but in a converse way, is to be found in poem 115, bearing the title 'To his friend Nikephoros, who sent him biscuits during the time of the *broumalion*'. Instead of accompanying a gift, it comments upon the gift of his friend:

Ἐκ ῥημάτων με δεξιού, μὴ πεμμάτων·  
 ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἡδὺ βρουμάλιον οἱ λόγοι,  
 ὡς προσκυνητῇ καὶ λατρευτῇ τοῦ λόγου,  
 τῶν δὲ σταλέντων πεμμάτων τίς μοι λόγος;  
 λοιπὸν γε τοίνυν σύ, γλυκὺς Νικηφόρος,  
 ἀφείς τὸ πέμμα καὶ πλατύνας τὸ στόμα  
 τὰ δ' οὐατα γλύκαινε καὶ μὴ τὸ στόμα,  
 ταῖς ἡδοναῖς τέρπων με τῶν σῶν ῥημάτων.<sup>39</sup>

*Greet me with words, not with biscuits!*  
*Words are for me a sweet broumalion,*  
*as I am a devotee and worshipper of words.*  
*What do I gain by the biscuits you sent me?*  
*So, my sweet Nikephoros, as for you,*  
*leave the biscuits and open wide your mouth,*  
*sweeten my ears, and not my mouth,*  
*by entertaining me with the pleasures of your words.*

Nikephoros is rebuked – in a playful way, of course – for not living up to the intellectual ideal. Again, 'normal' material gifts are contrasted, and found inferior, to the immaterial literary gift that is presented here as a source of purely intellectual pleasure. The slight

<sup>37</sup> See Marc Lauxtermann, 'The Velocity of Pure Iambs. Byzantine Observations on the Metre and Rhythm of the Dodecasyllable', *JÖB*, 48 (1998): pp. 9–33, esp. pp. 24–25.

<sup>38</sup> Crimi, *Canzoniere*, p. 164.

<sup>39</sup> I adopt Crimi's conjecture τὰ δ' οὐατα at line 7, see Crimi, *Canzoniere*, p. 156.



protestation against material gifts in favour of literary gifts (as in poems 115 and 124) was already a *topos* in epistolography.<sup>40</sup> The idea concords with the claim of Maupous in poem 28, the *programma* to the oration for the angels: instead of material gifts, his love for learning incites him to give words. Moreover, 'delights of words' (K 115.8: ἡδοναῖς τῶν ῥημάτων) is the expression that also occurs in the book epigram of Sabbas. Christophoros does nothing other than appeal to a widely accepted idea.

In these two poems, Christophoros implies that the taste for words is not shared by everybody: only a literary gift is suitable for him, as he is a 'devotee and worshipper of words' (K 115.3), and as 'nothing is better in life' (K 124.12). This refined taste is seen as the hallmark of a distinct type of individual: the true intellectual. Only this type of intellectual is able to recognize the value of those gifts, a value that is not measurable by evident material standards. This mutually shared appreciation of the signification of such a gift forges exclusive bonds that hold the intellectual elite together.

The poetic form of these gifts adds to this value. The sheer amount of labour invested in the composition of prosodic verse would testify to the time and energy one is willing to give to someone else. The effort to curb verse in the obsolete quantitative prosodic pattern, at first sight needless, can be considered a token of the *prothumia* or *pothos* with which a gift is given. Christophoros asserts the metric artistry of this undertaking in a conscious way: 'I produce rhythms of words with my writing pen' (K 124.8). It appears that his intention is to polish his letters to such a degree that he shapes them in poetry, turning them into still more valuable gifts.

In conclusion, the discourse of 'words as a gift' is a powerful one that celebrates the common taste of these circles of intellectuals and confirms the relevance of their skills.<sup>41</sup> Even in quite blunt proposals for exchange, as in Psellos' poem 16, there is a strong appeal to an appreciation of the labours needed to master these skills. The stress on the artistic quality and spiritual signification of the poetic gift permits these poets to project it into a graceful sphere of exchange where gifts and counter-gifts are represented as spontaneous acts of admiration, compelled by a shared sensibility to the delights of *logoi*. The powerful people in society, although perhaps not the most intellectually sophisticated, nevertheless partake of the prestige that accompanies these exchanges, if only by accepting the gift (and, obviously, by creating the appropriate material framework to make these gifts possible). The discourse of the gift of words, moreover, permits the creation of bonds, but also exclusions. While evoking a paradisiacal world of mutually appreciated aesthetics, it also helps to guard this paradise against the boorish intruder. Poetry, therefore, is not only an innocent pastime of government officials; it is also a social tool that does not fail to be effective.

<sup>40</sup> Apostolos Karpozelos, 'Realia in Byzantine Epistolography X–XIIc', *BZ*, 77 (1984): pp. 20–37, here pp. 20–21.

<sup>41</sup> On the sociological impact of 'taste', and the process of making intellectual or cultural skills socially relevant, see Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction: critique sociale du jugement* (Paris, 1979).

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# PART III

## Genres

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# Chapter 4

## The Byzantine Didactic Poem – A Neglected Literary Genre?

### A Survey with Special Reference to the Eleventh Century

Wolfram Hörandner

*Aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae | aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae.* With these words of his *Ars poetica* (333f.) Horace shows in an acute way what poetry can achieve. It can be useful *or* pleasant, and it can also combine the two elements. Goethe, in his short treatise ‘Über das Lehrgedicht’<sup>1</sup> (‘On the didactic poem’), expresses a similar idea, stating ‘Alle Poesie soll belehrend sein, aber unmerklich’ (‘Any poetry shall be didactic, but in a hidden way’). And the German classic continues that it does not make sense to add didactic as a fourth kind of poetry to the existing three, that is, lyric, epic and dramatic. For him didactic poetry is ‘ein Mittelgeschöpf zwischen Poesie und Rhetorik’ (‘a creation between poetry and rhetoric’). Here a conception is underlying which we find time and again in modern publications, the distinction between the didactic poem in the narrow sense on the one hand and poems with didactic elements on the other.

Considering the rich amount of didactic poetry of any kind and any level within the whole of Byzantine literature, it may be astonishing that up to now no publication exists devoted to this branch of literature in a comprehensive way. To mention a significant example, there is no relevant entry in the index to Hunger’s handbook,<sup>2</sup> although of course Hunger deals with many didactic texts in both verse and prose. On the other hand, the *Lexikon des Mittelalters* contains, within the article *Lehrhafte Literatur*, a substantial sub-article *Byzantinische Literatur*, written by Christian Hannick.<sup>3</sup> The author has assembled a great number of authors and works, and it does not matter that some of the works mentioned, while being of a didactic character, can scarcely be regarded as didactic poems in the strict sense.

The situation is quite different with ancient literature and medieval Latin literature. There the phenomenon is too important to be neglected – suffice it to mention authors

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<sup>1</sup> *Goethe’s nachgelassene Werke* 9 (Stuttgart/Tübingen, 1833), pp. 154–156.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (2 vols, Munich, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> *Lexikon des Mittelalters* V (Munich/Zürich, 1991), pp. 1827–1844: ‘Lehrhafte Literatur’; pp. 1842–1844: XV. ‘Byzantinische Literatur’ (Christian Hannick).

as prominent as Hesiod, Aratos, Vergil or Lucretius. It may be also due to the increasing interest in literary *Gebrauchsformen* that in recent decades a number of publications have been devoted to didactic literature in Antiquity and Middle Ages, in a quest for new and adequate theoretical approaches to this type of literature.<sup>4</sup> Questions of generic character and definition are discussed controversially – no wonder, given that no clear and distinct statements on this issue exist in antiquity, so that possible definitions can only be obtained by extrapolation from the texts themselves. Ancient theoreticians tend to deny either the poetic or the didactic character of didactic poetry. On the one hand, Aristotle states that Empedocles is not a poet, but a scientist, and on the other hand Cicero finds that Aratos is not competent in astronomy, although he wrote skilfully on the subject.<sup>5</sup> These authors are representatives of the *aut – aut* argumentation just like Horace in the verses quoted at the beginning.

Bernd Effe<sup>6</sup> makes a distinction between a formal and a more content-oriented type of didactic poetry. In the formal type the masterly handling of the poetic form dominates, whereas the content-oriented type focuses primarily on scientific truth and precision, the poetic form just serving as a means for better transmitting the contents. Between these two types, according to Effe, there exists a third one, which he calls the transparent type; it is characterized by the attempt to make the dignity of the subject transparent by the sublime form.

Katharina Volk<sup>7</sup> postulates four criteria which, according to her, have to be met when speaking of a didactic poem:

- 'Explicit didactic intent'
- The 'teacher-student constellation'
- 'Poetic self-consciousness'
- 'Poetic simultaneity', that is, the creation of a dramatic illusion of a lesson actually in progress as the poem progresses.

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<sup>4</sup> Leif Ludwig Albertsen, *Das Lehrgedicht. Eine Geschichte der antikisierenden Sachepik in der neueren deutschen Literatur mit einem unbekannten Gedicht Albrecht von Hallers* (Aarhus, 1967); Bernhard Fabian, 'Das Lehrgedicht als Problem der Poetik', in Hans Robert Jauf (ed.), *Die nicht mehr schönen Künste. Grenzphänomene des Ästhetischen* (Munich, 1968), pp. 67–89 (discussion: pp. 549–557); Bernhard Sowinski, *Lehrhafte Dichtung des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1971); Bernd Effe, *Dichtung und Lehre. Untersuchungen zur Typologie des antiken Lehrgedichts* (Munich, 1977); Thomas Haye, *Das lateinische Lehrgedicht im Mittelalter* (Leiden, 1997); Katharina Volk, *The Poetics of Latin Didactic. Lucretius, Vergil, Ovid, Manilius* (Oxford, 2002), inaccessible for me; here cited following the review of E.J. Kenney in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2003.01.26; Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz (eds), *Wissensvermittlung in dichterischer Gestalt* (Stuttgart, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Arist. *Poet.* 1447b; Cic. *De orat.* 1, 69; cf. DNP VII (Stuttgart/Weimar, 1999), pp. 26–32: 'Lehrgedicht' (R. Gl[ei]).

<sup>6</sup> Effe, *Dichtung*, pp. 30–33.

<sup>7</sup> Volk, *Poetics*.

These criteria are also applicable to Byzantine didactic poetry, as is Effe's typological model (formal – content-oriented – transparent).

Before discussing in detail some examples from eleventh-century Byzantium, a few words may be said about a type of didactic text that normally does not enjoy great esteem. I refer to the so-called mnemonic verses, which are generally neglected and often even excluded from the realm of literature. In general surveys they are often omitted or, if treated at all, just mentioned marginally in a few words. Because of their purely technical and informative contents they are generally denied any literary character. Effe devotes a short excursus to them,<sup>8</sup> which he closes with the significant words: 'Sie stellen eine Gebrauchsform des Unterrichts, nicht aber eine Form der Literatur dar'. ('They are a form of usage of instruction, not of literature'.) Byzantinists may be reminded of Alexander Kazhdan and his rigorous judgement about what is literature and what is not.

Regarding Byzantine didactic poetry, examples exist from practically all centuries. The genre reaches a certain culmination in the eleventh and twelfth centuries – suffice it to mention here Michael Psellos, Niketas of Herakleia and Philippos Monotropos for the eleventh century, John Tzetzes for the twelfth. The subjects treated are manifold. They include (in alphabetical order and without claiming completeness) antiquity, astrology, chronography, ethics, grammar, jurisprudence, mathematics, medicine, rhetoric, theology.

As to their metrical form, from the eleventh century onwards the favourite metre is the political verse, followed by the dodecasyllable. The hymnographic model of the canon is not used very much, at least in poems written by known authors of the eleventh century – in this respect Niketas of Herakleia with his orthographical canons is an exception, as is Christopher Mitylenaios, if we include his metrical synaxaria in the list of didactic poems. Let us now have a look at the most prominent authors and some of their works.<sup>9</sup>

## Michael Psellos

Michael Psellos is, together with Niketas of Herakleia, the most prolific didactic poet of his time, and obviously the most versatile. Westerink's edition<sup>10</sup> contains under the heading *Didactica maiora* nine titles, and another six under *Didactica minora*. It may be added that among the poems which Westerink classified convincingly as *spuria*, a dozen are of didactic character.

<sup>8</sup> Effe, *Dichtung*, pp. 231–233.

<sup>9</sup> Very useful remarks on eleventh-century poetry in general and on Psellos' didactic poems in particular are provided by Floris Bernard, 'The circulation of poetry in eleventh-century Byzantium', in Savvas Neocleous (ed.), *Papers from the First and Second Postgraduate Forums in Byzantine Studies: Sailing to Byzantium, Trinity College Dublin, 16–17 April 2007 and 15–16 May 2008* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2009), pp. 145–162.

<sup>10</sup> Leendert G. Westerink (ed.), *Michael Psellus. Poemata* (Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1992).

The criteria regarded as crucial for didactic poems are fulfilled. Information on the respective topics prevails, yet a certain formal quality is also achieved, at least in the *didactica maiora*. The didactic intention – in form and content – is evident. If a teacher–student relationship (be it real or fictitious) is regarded as a constitutive element of didactic poetry, the titles of Psellos' poems may provide convincing indications. According to the manuscript titles eight of the nine *maiora* are addressed to an emperor, the manuscripts speaking partly of Konstantinos Monomachos, partly of Michael Doukas. In some cases the emperors' names vary from manuscript to manuscript, which Westerink understands in the sense that the author dedicated the poem first to the one, then to the other emperor.<sup>11</sup> In the text itself, the dedication to an emperor is corroborated by inserted addresses like *ἄναξ, δέσποτα, στεφηφόρε*. When reading the name of an emperor as addressee, one would a priori think of a patron rather than of a pupil. Yet the one does not exclude the other necessarily. In one case (poem 6: *Grammatica*), some of the manuscripts, including the central Psellos-codex *Paris. gr.* 1182, declare in the title that the poem was written for Michael Doukas on behalf of his father in order to introduce the son in the study of the sciences by simple and pleasant verses (*ὥστε διὰ τῆς εὐκολίας καὶ τῆς ἡδύτης ἐνεχθῆναι τοῦτον εἰς τὴν μάθησιν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν*). Probably *ἡδύτης* refers to the verse form in general, and *εὐκολία* to the political verse in particular. A similar declaration is also to be found in some of the manuscripts of poem 8 (*Synopsis legum*).

In the lengthy inscription of poem six, the formulation *Σύνοψις ... περὶ πασῶν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν* deserves some attention. It can hardly refer to the poem on grammar *alone* but rather to a group of poems forming together a kind of *synopsis* of all disciplines. So poems three to seven (or three to eight) could be regarded as forming a whole. This is corroborated by the *καὶ* in the initial verses of poems three and four (3 *Δέχου καὶ τὸν θεμέλιον τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς δογμάτων*; 4 *Γίνωσκε καὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἱερῶν συνόδων*). Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to interpret this *καὶ* as referring to a preceding poem, although we have to be aware that such an interpretation of *καὶ* in the initial verse of a poem is by no means compulsory. However, it would be appropriate to the presentation of grammar and orthography in poem six as *πρῶτος αὕτη θεμέλιος καὶ βάσις μαθημάτων*. So it can be argued that initially there was a group of poems focusing on education as a whole, with poem six at its head. The manuscript tradition does not help, because the poems are transmitted in different manuscripts, the famous codex *Paris. gr.* 1182 containing only poems six and seven.

In poem 1 (*De inscriptionibus Psalmorum*) the underlying ancestor of three closely related manuscripts omitted any reference to the emperor in the title, obviously on purpose: it also replaced consistently the relevant vocatives in the text (1 *δέσποτά μου*, 17, 37, 292 *ἄναξ*, 293 *στεφηφόρε*) with other, more neutral words, leaving out also the whole epilogue (292–302) obviously directed to an emperor (cf., beside the above-mentioned epithets, v. 301 *κἀγὼ συναναβήσομαι πρὸς τὰς σὰς ἐπανόδους*). It is hard to decide whether these adaptations were made by a later teacher or – more plausibly – by

<sup>11</sup> Westerink, *Poemata*, p. 1.



the author himself,<sup>12</sup> who used the poem in his own teaching, this time suppressing any mention of its former imperial recipient.

Poem 2 (*In Canticum*) begins with some dedicatory verses. In his love for knowledge (τὸ φιλομαθὲς τὸ σόν), the emperor (according to manuscript titles Konstantinos Monomachos, Michael Doukas or even Nikephoros Botaneiates) has asked for an explanation and exegesis of the unusual and manifold (τὴν ξένην καὶ ποικίλην) *Canticum canticorum*. The author follows this imperial order and presents, trusting in God, the exegesis of the whole *Canticum* in simple and ordinary words (the idea is resumed at the end of the poem). I shall not dwell here on the words ἐξήγησιν πᾶσάν σοι τῶν ἁσμάτων, which do not correspond exactly with reality (Luciano Bossina has recently discussed this problem in detail).<sup>13</sup> I just want to comment a little on the words ἐν ἀπλουστάταις λέξεσι καὶ κατημαξευμέναις. Of course this is an exordial topos of modesty, for in fact style and vocabulary are not particularly simple. Yet these words deserve being taken seriously. They express the author's aim to make the reader acquainted with the strange world of the *Canticum* by transposing it into a familiar linguistic level. The word κατημαξευμένος must not be understood in a pejorative sense, its meaning is rather 'clear', 'comprehensible', 'common'. In a similar sense it is used by Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos at the beginning of *De administrando imperio*:<sup>14</sup> σαφεῖ καὶ κατημαξευμένῳ λόγῳ καὶ οἷον εἰκῇ ῥέοντι πεζῷ καὶ ἀπλοῖκῳ. Psellos himself juxtaposes the four ancient dialects with a fifth one, that is, τὴν συνήθη καὶ κοινήν καὶ κατημαξευμένην (in poem 6, line 6). Here it will not be far from truth to take all these three terms together as a periphrastic way of designating one and the same linguistic unit, the *Koine*.

As to its contents, it has been shown by various scholars that the exegesis of Psellos closely follows Gregorios of Nyssa.<sup>15</sup> Originality is not to be found, and indeed Psellos' aim was not originality, but literary shaping. In this way he followed, as in many other places, his basic principle of harmony between contents and form, with other words harmony between philosophy and theology on the one hand and rhetoric on the other.

In poem 3 (*De dogmate*) the author summarizes Christian dogma and explains terms like οὐσία, ὑπόστασις, and so forth. In the three concluding verses he says that while for an emperor knowledge of many things is necessary, knowledge of dogma is of primary importance because this is beginning and basis (ἀρχὴ καὶ κρηπίς) of imperial status.

<sup>12</sup> Thanks are due to Floris Bernard who made this suggestion at the conference. See also his paper in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> Luciano Bossina, 'Psello distratto. Questioni irrisolte nei versi "in Canticum"', in Victoria Panagl (ed.), *Dulce Melos. La poesia tardoantica e medievale. Atti del III Convegno internazionale di studi, Vienna, 15–18 novembre 2004* (Alessandria, 2007), pp. 337–360.

<sup>14</sup> Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De Administrando Imperio*, (eds) G. Moravcsik and R.J.H. Jenkins (Washington, D.C., 1967), p. 48, 1, 8–9.

<sup>15</sup> Westerink, *Poemata*, p. 13: 'Paucis exceptis nihil est nisi paraphrasis commentarii Gregorii Nysseni'; Bossina, 'Psello distratto', has shown that also the other Gregorios, Psellos' great example Gregorios of Nazianzos, has left his traces.

Here the double role of the emperor becomes clear. He is the patron, and at the same time he receives instruction.

Poem 4 (*De conciliis*) is of a very systematic character: for each of the seven ecumenical councils, Psellos names the place, the ruling emperor, normally also the Patriarch of Constantinople, the number of council-fathers, important persons (for example, for *Constantinople I* Gregorios of Nazianzos, for *Ephesus* Kyrillos of Alexandria) and finally the condemned heresies and their heads. As a curiosity Westerink prints some verses contained in a single manuscript that continues the series until the council of Florence. It is not only chronology that immediately demonstrates that these verses are to be classified as spurious, for their author, although following Psellos' formal model not unskillfully, presents himself as a fervent λατινόφρων.

Poem 5 (*De nomocanone*) is basically limited to an enumeration of ecumenical and local synods, in each case mentioning the number of enacted canons. The poem closes with some verses on the book itself, the *nomocanon*, and on canonical punishments.

The first part (vv. 1–269, roughly half the poem) of poem 6 (*Grammatica*) is derived from Dionysios Thrax and commentaries on this author; the second part (vv. 270–490) contains explanations of rare words. We have already mentioned the title, with its indications that the poem was ordered by the emperor for the use of his son, and also the beginning of the poem where the addressee – apparently the emperor's son – is advised to attach great importance to grammar and orthography, because this study forms the basis of sciences. Then follow statements about the five dialects: Aeolian, Ionian, Attic, Dorian – and the *Koine*. After giving some examples of different forms of a given word in the different dialects, Psellos recommends using the *Koine* and despising the other dialects (ταύτην μοι μόνην δῖωκε, τῶν δ' ἄλλων καταφρόνει). This may sound somewhat astonishing at first sight, given the high esteem generally accorded to the use of Attic (ἄττικίζειν) by the Byzantines. However, here the author does not speak of ambitious highbrow literary texts, but of linguistic realism, that is, the level of language appropriate to didactic texts. In this respect Psellos follows the principle expressed by Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos:<sup>16</sup> Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιδείξιν καλλιγραφίας ἢ φράσεως ἡττικισμένης καὶ τὸ διηρμένον διογκούσης καὶ ὑψηλὸν ποιῆσαι ἐσπούδασα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον διὰ κοινῆς καὶ καθωμιλημένης ἀπαγγελίας διδάξαι σοι ἔσπευσα, ἅπερ οἶμαι δεῖν σε μὴ ἀγνοεῖν. The commentaries on Dionysios Thrax also speak of five dialects, and in a scholion we read κοινή, ἥτινι πάντες χρώμεθα κοινῶς.<sup>17</sup>

The words are listed in a roughly alphabetical order (according to the initial characters; no *antistoichia*), with some addenda towards the end. In most cases – in fact in nearly all of them – a verse contains two glosses, each together with a synonym, and nothing more. Rarely do we encounter a more detailed explanation. Taking account of the criteria of didactic poetry mentioned above, we can confirm the existence of a didactic intention, and a teacher–pupil relation is also realized. However, despite the

<sup>16</sup> Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De administrando imperio*, p. 48, 1, 10–13.

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Hilgard (ed.), *Grammatici Graeci* (Leipzig, 1901), vol. I.3, pp. 292–442, at pp. 309–329. Nearly identical wording in Gregorios Korinthios, *De dialectis*, ed. Gottfried Heinrich Schäfer (Leipzig, 1811), p. 12.

verse form it is difficult to attribute any *literary* ambition to this part of the poem. It is merely a list of synonyms, as in the lexica, with the only difference that they are arranged in an adequate way to make them fit into the political verse.

The author closes with the statement that, though there are many other obscure words (σκοταῖα), those presented here are sufficient.

Poem 7 (*Rhetorica*) gives a survey of the *corpus Hermogenianum*. Again in the first three verses the addressee is advised to keep in mind the importance of the subject matter. When he is familiar with rhetoric, he will have strength of word, grace of speech and persuasiveness in his enterprises – all of these are elements crucial for an emperor. And in the five concluding verses the author praises his own τεχνύδριον in a really rhetorical attitude: it is concise and lucid, and it is γλυκύτητος ἀνάμεστον, χάριτος πεπλησμένον, | ἡδυπετές, ἡδύφθογγον, ἡδυμελές ἐκτόπως ('full of pleasure and grace, with pleasant words, pleasant sound and extraordinarily pleasant tune'). The addressee will draw profit from the learned game.

I leave aside the voluminous *Synopsis legum* (poem 8) and add some remarks on poem 9 (*De medicina*). This is the only one among the *Didactica maiora* that is written entirely in dodecasyllables, and this could be due, in a sense, to the audience, for this poem is also the only one in this group without any dedication to an emperor or any mention whatsoever of an emperor. Yet there are some verses (vv. 531–537, after the passage about the urine) where the author speaks about his intention and the audience he wants to reach: he does not intend to treat everything in detail, but to give his friends, that is, grammarians, orators and philosophers, a small taste of the art of medicine, so that by love of the pleasure of the *metron* they also seize, together with the *metron*, the elements of the art of medicine. The poem, then, is directed neither to specialists nor to students, but to an educated circle. Its aim is not completeness, as would be the case with a handbook for specialists, but an insight into the discipline. The metrical form will help appreciation of the contents. This presupposes that the metre itself is loved for its aesthetic value (τὰς χάριτας τοῦ μέτρου). Only then will it be able to rouse interest in the discipline.

In contrast to the great majority of the *Didactica maiora*, for which the poet has chosen the simple and comprehensible form of the political verse, the six *minora* are entirely written in dodecasyllables. There, in few verses, questions of detail from various disciplines are treated: the parable of the leaven from Matt 13.33 (10), the moonstruck (that is, epileptic) from Matt 17.15 (11), an impediment to marriage (12), movements of the sky and of the soul (13), the iambic metre (14, attribution uncertain) and questions of diet (15, equally not quite certain). One of the poems (12: *De matrimonio prohibito*) is dedicated to the emperor Michael, whereas here and there an anonymous, perhaps fictitious reader is addressed by words like βέλτιστε (10.1), λάβης (12.2), ἔχεις (12.4), εὔροις (13.3) or ἀρίστησον (15.2).

Poem 14 is an instruction how to write correct iambs, directed to a probably fictitious φίλος. However, the attribution of this poem to Psellos is far from certain. According to Westerink,<sup>18</sup> Psellos is called the author only in three late and closely related manuscripts. Another manuscript bears the note τοῦ μοναχοῦ κυροῦ Ἰωαννικίου, though in a hand different from that of the text; the remaining manuscripts transmit the verses without an author's name. According to a note by Gallavotti,<sup>19</sup> the attribution to a certain Ioannikios is corroborated by Cod. Vat. Pal. gr. 92 (late thirteenth century), which had escaped Westerink's attention. Taking this into account we could identify the author of the poem with Ioannikios, teacher and writer of σχέδη in the circle surrounding Theodore Prodromos.<sup>20</sup>

Obviously the poem has a mnemotechnic function. This is also true of some of the *spuria* in Westerink's edition, particularly poems 90 (*In XII apostolos*) and 92 (*De Ulixis erroribus*). Poems 67 (*Ad monachum superbum*) and 68 (*Ad eundem*) are not didactic poems in the strict sense, they are defamatory poems. Yet they are so full of philological erudition that one can attribute them a didactic character in a wider sense. Since Krumbacher<sup>21</sup> it has been *communis opinio* that these verses cannot be a work of Psellos, because in one passage (68.81) Psellos himself, together with a couple of other prominent poets – (George) Pisides, Christophoros (Mitylenaios), Leon (probably Choroisphaktes) and Theophylaktos (of Bulgaria) – is mentioned as already deceased. But who can be the real author of these verses? At any rate it has to be an author very familiar with philology. Should we think of Niketas of Herakleia? Or of Gregory Pardos? Or of the above-mentioned monk Ioannikios? By the aggressive tone one is reminded of John Tzetzes, but since not only the addressee, but also the author is a monk, Tzetzes has to be ruled out. The same applies to Theodore Prodromos. The question remains open. What we can say with certainty is just that the two poems are not genuine works of Psellos.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Westerink, *Poemata*, p. XXII.

<sup>19</sup> Carlo Gallavotti, 'Nota sulla schedografia di Moscopulo e suoi precedenti fino a Teodoro Prodromo', *BollClass*, III/4 (1983): pp. 3–35, at p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, ed. W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos. Historische Gedichte* (Vienna, 1974), pp. 492–494 (poems 61 and 62); Ioannis Vassis, 'Graeca sunt, non leguntur. Zu den schedographischen Spielereien des Theodoros Prodromos', *BZ*, 86/87 (1993–1994): pp. 1–19, at p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* (Munich, 1897), pp. 440–441.

<sup>22</sup> A detailed interpretation of them, prepared by Anneliese Paul and myself, has just appeared in *MG*, 11 (2011): pp. 107–137.

## Ioannes Mauropous

Ioannes Mauropous was one of the great teachers of his time. However, when focusing on didactic poems in the narrow sense,<sup>23</sup> we have to do with one work only. A number of rather late manuscripts transmit a poem on etymology in dodecasyllables, which is ascribed to the metropolitan of Euchaita. Paul de Lagarde published it on the basis of two manuscripts.<sup>24</sup> From the abrupt ending in both manuscripts one could draw the conclusion that the text was not complete in their common ancestor. Some years after Lagarde, R. Reitzenstein published the poem again, this time using two other manuscripts, one of them containing a much longer text (476 verses compared with 208 in Lagarde).<sup>25</sup> A. Karpozelos mentions another four manuscripts,<sup>26</sup> without giving any information about which one contains the full text and which the abridged version.

The explanations in the poem are concise, but mostly more detailed than in Psellos' list of rare words. In Psellos, as a rule the mention of a synonym was regarded as sufficient. Here, on the contrary, the etymological derivations are given more space. The material is arranged according to contents: sky and air, man, animals, plants and trees. Towards the end of the poem the poet informs his audience that bitter labours (πικροὶ πόνοι) had forced him to end this pleasant work abruptly (τὸν γλυκὺν τοῦτον πόνον). So even the longer version is not the realization of the author's initial concept.

Reitzenstein presented an in-depth inquiry on the place of the poem within the tradition of Greek etymologia.<sup>27</sup> If I am right, its authenticity has never been disputed. However, when reading the text some doubts may arise on metrical grounds: the number of violations of the laws of prosody is unusually high, which is surprising in the case of a learned author like Mauropous. Almost all of the violations occur in every manuscript used so far. In some cases (but by no means in all) the relevant word does not fit into the iambic trimeter, and in a poem of this type words cannot be changed at will. The author probably felt free to take this prosodical liberty in this particular, very technical poem. This is also the explanation of the discrepancy offered by Kuhn.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Hannick, 'Byzantinische Literatur', mentions a poem by Mauropous on laws. Perhaps he means L 30 Πρόγραμμα εἰς τοὺς νόμους, which, however, has hardly a didactic character.

<sup>24</sup> P. de Lagarde (ed.), *Iohannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in codice vaticano graeco 676 supersunt* (Göttingen, 1882), pp. VIII–XV.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Reitzenstein, *M. Terentius Varro und Johannes Mauropus von Euchaita. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* (Leipzig, 1901), pp. 3–30.

<sup>26</sup> Apostolos Karpozelos, *Συμβολή στὴ μελέτη τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ ἔργου τοῦ Ἰωάννη Μαυρόποδος* (Ioannina, 1982), p. 75.

<sup>27</sup> Reitzenstein, *Varro und Mauropus*; Richard Reitzenstein, *Geschichte der griechischen Etymologica. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philologie in Alexandria und Byzanz* (Leipzig, 1897), pp. 173–189.

<sup>28</sup> Friedrich Kuhn, *Symbolae ad doctrinae περὶ διχρόνων historiam pertinentes* (Bratislava, 1892), p. 63: 'In componendo hoc carmine Ioannes facere non poterat, quin eas leges metricas quas in carminum corpore illo perficiendo accurate observavit identidem violaret, quod vel ea de quibus disputavit vocabula metro iambico non satisfaciebant vel originationis explicandae causa

## Niketas of Herakleia

Niketas of Herakleia, ὁ τοῦ Σεργῶν, is the author of a number of didactic poems, some of them written in political verse or dodecasyllables, some in the form of liturgical poetry. Although he is well known, especially as the author of chains (*catenae*), many questions remain open, in particular concerning his works of secular content. A first attempt to shed light on questions of authenticity and patronage has been made by Anna Maria Guglielmino.<sup>29</sup> In recent years progress has been achieved by some important articles.<sup>30</sup> Bram Roosen gives a clear survey of Niketas' œuvre, questions of attribution and so forth. Jean Schneider also deals with questions of the tradition and structure of the whole *corpus* and gives some useful information on stylistic practice in the different poems. Theodora Antonopoulou concentrates on the orthographical canons, which she plans to present in a critical edition. Here I want merely to communicate a few remarks on some of the didactic poems.

In contrast to the versatility of Psellos, Niketas concentrates almost exclusively on grammar, including orthography and lexicography. In a poem of 100 dodecasyllables dealing with the nouns ending with *ny*<sup>31</sup> Niketas begins with the remark that although it is time to go to sleep he wants to stay awake for the sake of his pupils (παῖδες). The night will investigate the ending with *ny*, he says, using a little pun (ἡ νύξ δὲ τοῦ νῦ λῆξιεν). And at the end of the poem he resumes and extends this little joke: 'But now off to bed (ἀλλ' ὑπνωτέον), for with God the work has come to an end; you, my dear children, bring together male and female gender and create your works (τοὺς λόγους) like well-behaved children'.

Another poem on grammar contains 1087 political verses, preceded by a dedication in eight dodecasyllables.<sup>32</sup> The author addresses a noble youth (Πρὸς παῖδα σεμνὸν

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vocabula qualiacunque ei inserenda erant'. I am obliged to Marc Lauxtermann for having drawn my attention to this important passage of Kuhn's study.

<sup>29</sup> Anna Maria Guglielmino, 'Un maestro di grammatica a Bisanzio nell'XI secolo e l'epitafio per Niceta di Michele Psello', *SicGymn*, 27 (1974): pp. 421–463. Some of the author's theories have been questioned by Roosen (see following note).

<sup>30</sup> Peter Van Deun, 'Les *Diversa capita* du pseudo-Maxime et la chaîne de Nicétas d'Héraclée sur l'Évangile de Matthieu', *JÖB*, 45 (1995): pp. 19–24; Bram Roosen, 'The works of Nicetas Heracleensis (ὁ τοῦ Σεργῶν)', *Byz*, 69 (1999): pp. 119–144; Jean Schneider, 'La poésie didactique à Byzance: Nicétas d'Héraclée', *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, 58/4 (1999): pp. 388–423; Peter Van Deun, 'Nicétas d'Héraclée: Commentaire sur l'Évangile de S. Matthieu. Édition critique du Chapitre 4', *Byz*, 71 (2001): pp. 517–551; Theodora Antonopoulou, 'The Orthographical Kanons of Nicetas of Heraclea', *JÖB*, 53 (2003): pp. 171–185.

<sup>31</sup> J.-F. Boissonade (ed.), *Anecdota graeca*, (Paris, 1831), vol. 3, pp. 323–327. Roosen, 'The works', p. 125; and Schneider, 'La poésie', p. 396, point out that in *cod. Barocc.* 131 the poem is attributed, probably by mistake, to Psellos.

<sup>32</sup> Boissonade, *Anecdota graeca*, vol. 2, pp. 340–393; Cf. Antonio Tovar, 'Nicetas of Heraclea and Byzantine Grammatical Doctrine', in *Classical Studies Presented to Ben Edwin Perry* (Urbana (IL), 1969), pp. 223–235.



εὐγενῇ), probably Konstantinos Doukas, son of Michael VII.<sup>33</sup> Here, too, the night plays a part: for the author, the teacher, the small effort of a single night (μικρὸς τῆς μιᾶς νυκτὸς πόνος) will be a consolation in the troubles of life.<sup>34</sup> However, the main motif of these dedicatory verses is the contrast – or better the interplay – between *σεμνόν* and *παιδιά*,<sup>35</sup> that is, between sublime contents and playful form which probably means the metrical form and, at least in this case, particularly the political verse. Time and again the pupil is addressed by vocatives like *νέε* (14, 109, 948, 982) or *φίλτατε* or by verbs like *μὴ βουληθῆς* (28), *σκόπει* (65), *λάβε* (95) and so on. The poem receives a learned air from a remarkably high number of quotations of which I counted no less than 54; in addition there is a certain number of allusions, partly already recognized by Boissonade, partly still awaiting identification. Ancient authors are mentioned in thirty places, Homer with six mentions holding the lion's share, followed by Demosthenes and Lucian (five mentions each). Other authors: Aphthonios, Appian, Aristophanes, Cassius Dio, Dionysios Thrax, Joseph, Isokrates, Libanios, Philostratos, Plutarch. In the biblical sphere the psalms predominate (nine references), followed by the Gospels (five mentions) and other books of the Old and New Testament (four mentions). Among patristic and Byzantine authors Basileios of Caesarea, Gregorios of Nazianzos, Clemens of Alexandria and Procopius of Caesarea are mentioned.

The main subject matter of the poem is the syntax of the four types of words (noun, verb, preposition and adverb). In the verses 386–589, a lengthy insertion which interrupts the treatise proper, the author complains about the lack of interest in the subject matter on the side of his pupils, and only about 200 verses later does he end this verbose lamentation by saying 'enough of the bitterness of speech' and declaring that he will now bring back the speech to its original character (*πρὸς σχῆμα ... τὸ πρότερον*).

A poem in 123 political verses on the subjunctive of the aorist (*τὰ αὐθυπότακτα*)<sup>36</sup> deserves interest insofar as it refers directly to an aspect of school life, namely competitions among pupils, which is well-known from other sources.<sup>37</sup> The poem begins

<sup>33</sup> Roosen, 'The works', pp. 126–127.

<sup>34</sup> For this motif, the writing of the poem in a single night, cf. Antonopoulou, 'The Orthographical Kanons', p. 183.

<sup>35</sup> In one of the canons Niketas uses the well-known *gnome* ἔστι γὰρ καὶ παλῖν σωφρόνως. Cf. Schneider, 'La poésie', p. 412; For parallels see Demetrios A. Chrestides, *Μαρκιανὰ Ανέκδοτα* (Thessaloniki, 1984), p. 321; Wolfram Hörandner, 'Autor oder Genus? Diskussionsbeiträge zur 'Prodromischen Frage' aus gegebenem Anlass', *ByzSl*, 54 (1993): pp. 314–324, at pp. 320–321; Lee Francis Sherry, 'The *Paraphrase of St John* attributed to Nonnus', *Byz*, 66 (1996): pp. 409–430, at p. 414.

<sup>36</sup> The text was copied by Spyridon Lampros and published posthumously in *NE*, 16 (1922): pp. 192–196. In some manuscripts, including the one used by Lampros, the poem is ascribed to John Tzetzes. Yet, as in the two earliest manuscripts Niketas ὁ τοῦ Σεργῶν is mentioned as author, this attribution has been widely accepted. Cf. Carl Wendel, 'Tzetzes', *RE VII A 2* (1948): pp. 1959–2011, at pp. 2005–2006; Roosen, 'The works', p. 127. However Schneider, 'La poésie', p. 397, maintains the attribution to Tzetzes.

<sup>37</sup> In two poems of Christopher Mitylenaios (K 9 and 10) schedographical ἀγῶνες are mentioned; for this and some other competitions cf. Hunger, *Literatur*, vol. 2, p. 27; Carmelo

with the usual opening remark on the games in the political verse (παίξωμεν πολιτικοῖς ἐν στίχοις), which gives comfort in illness<sup>38</sup> and desperation (μικροψυχίας). Toward the end (v. 109–123) the pupil is encouraged to devote himself to learning till late in the night (ἐπαγρυπνῶν μελέτη) in order to defeat his colleagues in the forthcoming ἀγών.

## Philippos Monotropos

Finally a few words on the *Dioptra* of the monk Philippos, commonly called Philippos Monotropos, a poem in about 7,000 political verses on various theological issues.<sup>39</sup> That this is a didactic poem, is obvious. Yet there is an essential difference between the *Dioptra* and the poems mentioned so far: it is, as it were, didactic on two levels. Of course the poet-teacher addresses his readers and listeners in order to give them theological instruction. But he does it using the form of a *prosopopoiia*, a dialogue between *Psyche* and *Sarx*, *Psyche* posing the questions, *Sarx* giving the instructive answers. When the poet states in the prologue that he, uneducated, addresses an uneducated audience (ὁ ἀμαθὴς πρὸς ἀμαθεῖς), this refers basically to the rather simple language, and not to contents nor to structure; because despite the linguistic simplicity a certain literary ambition is shown by the compositional element of *prosopopoiia*.

## Conclusion

In this short contribution it was not possible – neither was it my intention – to give an exhaustive survey of the Byzantine didactic poem in general; what has been possible is ‘giving a small taste’ of relevant works dating from the eleventh century. Perhaps some aspects became clear. Without doubt *any* Byzantine poetry is in a sense didactic. This element passes through all genres defined according to criteria of contents or of form. Therefore – in the sense of Goethe’s words quoted in the very beginning – it may be unjustified to postulate a separate genre of didactic poetry. Still there are poems that

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Crimi et al., *Cristoforo di Mitilene, Canzoniere* (Catania, 1983): pp. 56–58; Alexander P. Kazhdan and Ann Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley/London, 1985): p. 126 point to an ἀγών in the presence of the emperor, mentioned by Konstantinos Manasses: Konstantin Horna, ‘Eine unedierte Rede des Konstantin Manasses’, *WS*, 28 (1906): pp. 171–204, at p. 181: l. 264–265, ἵσταται ποτε καὶ παισὶ τροφίμοις γραμματικῆς ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς βασιλεύς ἀγών.

<sup>38</sup> In an unedited poem Niketas speaks about the difficulties caused by his illness: ἡμεῖς δὲ βραχυλόγοι | οὐδ’ ἀναπνεῖν ἔωμενοι μέγα παρὰ τῆς νόσου. The verses are published by Schneider, ‘La poésie’, p. 414.

<sup>39</sup> For details see the contribution of Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb in this volume. See also Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb, ‘Die *Prosopopoiia* in der *Dioptra*: Didaktisches Mittel oder literarische Charaktere?’, in Mihailo Popović and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller (eds), *Junge Römer – Neue Griechen* (Vienna, 2008), pp. 7–13.



share – beyond a general didactic character – some elements which distinguish them as a coherent group of texts. In each of these poems the poet addresses a pupil or a group of pupils as a teacher. This teacher-pupil relation is always present, be it real or fictitious, explicit or implicit. Often, mainly in the introductory parts, stress is laid on simplicity, and this is not just a modesty topos – though it is also that – but it is in addition a program. The simple and ordinary language is not at all a product of the writer's inability, but an expression of his intentions, as is the choice of the political verse, often called a game (*παίζειν, παιδιά*). Both – simple language and verse form – are consciously chosen means to make the addressee acquainted with a complex subject matter in a comprehensible way. When Goethe called didactic poetry 'ein Mittelgeschöpf zwischen Poesie und Rhetorik', this can be applied also to Byzantine didactic poetry – and basically to the whole of Byzantine poetry. Whichever the decision of the genre-question may be, didactic poetry – on all levels – can claim a place within the history of Byzantine literature.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> I am deeply grateful to Marc Lauxtermann for having made accessible for me before publication his intriguing and fully convincing observations on the question of poeticity: Marc Lauxtermann, 'Byzantine Didactic Poetry and the Question of Poeticity', in P. Odorico, P. Agapitos and M. Hinterberger (eds), *Doux Remède: Poésie et poétique à Byzance* (Paris, 2008), pp. 37–46.

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# Chapter 5

## The Reader in Eleventh-century Book Epigrams

Klaas Bentein and Kristoffel Demoen

Τὸν δακτύλοις γράψαντα, τὸν κεκτημένον  
τὸν ἀναγινώσκοντα τὴν βίβλον ταύτην  
φύλαττε τοὺς τρεῖς, ἢ τριάς παναγία.<sup>1</sup>

In the context of a one-year research project,<sup>2</sup> a database with eleventh-century book epigrams has been created, from which we have edited elsewhere several unknown poems.<sup>3</sup> In the brief comments added to those poems, we made some preliminary remarks on the relationship they established between the scribe, the author of the main text, and the reader.<sup>4</sup> In the present article we would like to explore this relationship further, and focus in particular on the role and position of the reader in this poetic genre.

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<sup>1</sup> “The one who has written this book with his fingers, its owner, and its reader: save the three of them, most holy Trinity”. Text from *Vatic. Pii II gr.* 24, f. 315r (a. 1071/2). Based on an autopsy of this epigram, we have made some minor improvements to the previous edition by Henry Stevenson, *Codices manuscripti graeci reginae Suecorum et Pii PP. II Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome, 1888), p. 152. When quoting or editing entire book epigrams, we add a reference to the relevant page in Ioannis Vassis, *Initia Carminum Byzantinorum* (Berlin/New York, 2005). Epigrams merely serving as an illustration or a parallel are indicated by their initial verse, according to Vassis’ usage (with corrections of orthographical mistakes). For this epigram, see Vassis, p. 722.

<sup>2</sup> This project (funded by the Belgian *Research Foundation – Flanders* (2007–2008)) consisted of collecting and commenting upon as many book epigrams as possible from eleventh-century Greek manuscripts. Meanwhile, a larger research project has been financed by the Belgian *Hercules Foundation – Flanders* (2010–2015), aiming at a searchable on-line database of book epigrams from the whole Byzantine period, see [www.dbbe.ugent.be](http://www.dbbe.ugent.be).

<sup>3</sup> Klaas Bentein, Floris Bernard, Marc De Groote and Kristoffel Demoen, ‘Book Epigrams in Honour of the Church Fathers: Some Inedita from the Eleventh Century’, *GRBS*, 49 (2009): pp. 281–294; and ‘New Testament Book Epigrams: Some New Evidence from the Eleventh Century’, *BZ*, 103 (2010): pp. 13–23; Klaas Bentein and Floris Bernard, ‘A Cycle of Book Epigrams in Honour of the Four Evangelists’, *Scriptorium*, 65.2 (2011): pp. 237–249..

<sup>4</sup> For this issue, see also Catherine Holmes, ‘Written Culture in Byzantium and Beyond: Contexts, Contents and Interpretations’, in Catherine Holmes and Judith Waring (eds), *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond* (Leiden, 2002), p. 2.

Some years ago Marc Lauxtermann defined book epigrams as ‘poems that are intimately related to the production of literary texts and manuscripts.’<sup>5</sup> He distinguished three types of book epigrams, each focusing on a specific participant of the ‘production chain’ of the book: *laudatory epigrams* praising the author of the text, *colophon verses* (or *scribal epigrams*) foregrounding the scribe, and *dedicatory epigrams* identifying the owner, commissioner or patron. One could supplement this list with three other similar types: *title epigrams* introducing the text or the (table of contents of the) book,<sup>6</sup> *miniature epigrams* accompanying and commenting upon miniatures<sup>7</sup> and *recommendatory epigrams* emphasizing the value of the book – and hence being closely related to the laudatory type.<sup>8</sup>

Although this more refined categorization has proven its practical use for our own database, it is, of course, an artificial distinction, imposed *post factum*: the labels do not correspond to any names used by the Byzantines themselves, unlike the traditional terms used by the scribes of the *Anthologia Palatina* for several types of epigrams.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, there are obvious overlaps between various categories, for example between the scribal

<sup>5</sup> Marc Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 2003), p. 197. See also his contribution to this volume, especially footnote. 24, where he discusses paratexts in manuscripts. On book epigrams, see also Daniele Bianconi, ‘Et le livre s’est fait poésie’, in Paolo Odorico, Panagiotis Agapitos and Martin Hinterberger (eds), *‘Doux remède ...’ Poésie et poétique à Byzance* (Paris, 2009), p. 31: ‘poèmes qui sont en relation étroite avec les processus de la production libraire, sur laquelle ils fournissent des informations précieuses et dont ils tirent leur inspiration’.

<sup>6</sup> For example ‘Η πῖναξ ἥδε τοῦσδε τοὺς λόγους φέρεῖ’ (Vassis, p. 316), which appears on the first folium of the *Athous Lavra* Δ46 (a. 1060), *Oxon. Bodl.gr.* 230 (eleventh century), *Sinait. gr.* 498 (eleventh century) and *Vindobon. Hist. gr.* 6 (eleventh century). See Irmgard Hutter, ‘Le copiste du métaphraste. On a Centre for Manuscript Production in Eleventh Century Constantinople’, in Giancarlo Prato (ed.), *I manoscritti greci tra riflessione e dibattito: Atti del V Colloquio Internazionale di Paleografia Greca* (Cremona, 4–10 ottobre 1998) (Florence, 2000), p. 542.

<sup>7</sup> For example ‘Τὸ θαῦμα καὶνὸν ὧδε τῶν ὀρωμένων’ (Vassis, p. 765) which appears on fol. 2<sup>v</sup> of the *Marc. gr.* 17 (a. 1004). The epigram is edited by Christopher Walter, ‘The Iconographical Sources for the Coronation of Milutin and Simonida at Gračanica’, in C. Walter (ed.), *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery* (Aldershot, 1993), pp. 193–194. Lauxtermann discusses the miniature epigrams in his chapter on ‘Epigrams on works of art’, see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 191–196.

<sup>8</sup> For example ‘Ερεύγεται μὲν καρδία ναι τοὺς λόγους’ (Vassis, p. 251), which appears on fol. 6<sup>v</sup> of the *Athous Lavra* Δ71 (eleventh century). The epigram is edited by Sophronios Eustratiades and Spyridon Lavriotis, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts in the Library of the Lavra on Mount Athos* (Cambridge, 1925), p. 68.

<sup>9</sup> See especially Athanasios Kambylis, ‘Das griechische Epigramm in byzantinischer Zeit’, *WJA*, 20 (1994–1995): pp. 19–47. Some of the book epigrams share several characteristics with ancient genres such as the ἀναθηματικά (AP VI), the ἐπιδεικτικά (AP IXa) and the προτροπικά (AP X); we shall discuss also an example that recalls the ἀριμνητικά καὶ γρίφοι (AP XIV). The frequent self-abasement in the scribal epigrams, conversely, is reminiscent of the typically Byzantine catanyctic verse.

and the dedicatory type: many poems cannot be subsumed under just one heading (see also below).

As the categories proposed above are based on either the place in the manuscript or the content of the text, they ignore an important aspect of literary communication: they do not take into account the receiver of the message. It is not our aim to introduce yet another kind of book epigram, but the colophon verses cited as an epigraph to this article illustrate that book epigrams often make explicit or implicit reference to their reader, be it in the first, second or third person.<sup>10</sup>

In this article we would like to present and analyse some noteworthy poems in which the reader plays a prominent role. We do not intend to 'reconstruct' the historical Byzantine reader, which Enrico Maltese actually calls 'un'impresa sostanzialmente irrealizzabile'.<sup>11</sup> Instead, we shall concentrate upon the *hypothetical* (or *fictive*) reader, a textual construct which does not necessarily correspond either with the *real* (or *empirical*) reader or with the *addressee* of the epigrams. As a result of the frequent technique of the apostrophe, the latter often changes within one and the same epigram, and may appear in more abstract forms, such as the author, the book, God, and so on. Of course, in many instances it is the reader who is addressed directly and explicitly: this may provide a clue regarding the actual audience of the book epigram.

Most of the texts discussed below come from manuscripts that appear to have circulated in monastic communities. Judith Waring has argued that these communities implemented various mechanisms 'to channel reading along the right lines'.<sup>12</sup> These mechanisms range from clear-cut reading-rules to more complex means of manipulation, such as the addition of marginal scholia. To a certain extent, book epigrams too may be regarded as a way of guiding or advising the reader,<sup>13</sup> as the following examples, mainly from eleventh-century manuscripts, will illustrate. Different kinds of appeal to the reader will appear: moral and spiritual advice, request for prayers, demand for recognition, challenge to solve a riddle, anticipation of criticism.

<sup>10</sup> See also Herbert Hunger, *Schreiben und Lesen in Byzanz: Die byzantinische Buchkultur* (Munich, 1989), p. 125.

<sup>11</sup> Enrico V. Maltese, 'Tra lettori e letture: l'utile e il dilettevole', *Humanitas*, 58/1 (2003): p. 140. Cf. Guglielmo Cavallo, *Leggere a Bisanzio* (Milan, 2007), p. 107: 'stabilire precise categorie di lettori a Bisanzio non è possibile'.

<sup>12</sup> Judith Waring, 'Monastic Reading in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries: Divine Ascent or Byzantine Fall?', in M. Mullett and A. Kirby (eds), *Work and worship at the Theotokos Evergetis, 1050–1200. Papers of the fourth Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, Portaferry, Co. Down, 14–17 September 1995* (Belfast, 1997), pp. 400–419. See also Guglielmo Cavallo, 'Πόλις γραμμάτων. Livelli di istruzione e usi di libri negli ambienti monastici a Bisanzio', *TM*, 14 (2002): pp. 95–113.

<sup>13</sup> Compare Philippe Lejeune's definition of a paratext, quoted in this volume by Marc Lauxtermann, n. 24.

On Reading and Imitating Klimakos<sup>14</sup>

Θερμῶς διέρχου ταῦτα καὶ λήψη χάριν  
 ἐκ τῆς ἄνωθεν δαψιλοῦς χορηγίας,  
 ψυχὴ γλυκεία, Χριστὸν ὁ στέρνοις φέρων,  
 οἷς ἀξίως δρᾶς εὐσεβῶς καθ' ἡμέραν.  
 πυκνῶς διέρχου ταῦτα διψῶν ἐνθέως 5  
 ἰδεῖν γαληνὸν, ἡμερον τὸν δεσπότην  
 οὐπερ τύχοιμεν εὐμενοῦς ὥρα δίκης  
 καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν χαρμονῆς ἀνεσπέρου.  
 ἐρῶμεν αὐτῶν ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας,  
 αὐτῶν ἐκείνων τῶν Θεῶ συνημμένων· 10  
 ζητῶμεν ὡς χρὴ τὸ κλέος τῶν πραέων·  
 τὴν προσπάθειαν ἐκφύγωμεν τοῦ βίου·  
 μόνων ἐκείνων θῶμεν ἐν νῷ τὸν πόθον  
 ὧν περ τὸ κάλλος οὐδαμῶς τις ἐκφράσοι.  
 μέμνησο μου μέμνησο· ναὶ μέμνησέ μου 15  
 ἐν σαῖς προσευχαῖς ἐκδυσσωπῶν συντόνως·  
 μὴ δὴ παρόψῃ τὴν δέησιν σοῦ δούλου·  
 καὶ γὰρ σε ἀγῶ καρδίας φέρω πλάτει  
 μνήμην ἔχων σου πάντα τὸν ζωῆς χρόνον·  
 εὖροιμεν ἅμφω τὴν δόσιν τῶν κρειττόνων 20  
 καὶ τὴν ἀνεκκλάλητον αἴγλην κυρίου.  
 καθ' ἡμέραν χρὴ προσδοκᾶν ζωῆς τέλος,  
 μᾶλλον καθ' ὥραν, καὶ τρέμειν ἀνενδότως  
 τὸ τῆς τομῆς ἄφυκτον, ἐχθρῶν τὸν φθόνον,  
 ὕλην περιττὴν ἐκκενοῦν καὶ δακρύειν, 25  
 ἀεὶ τε πράττειν πάντα τὰ Χριστῷ φίλα  
 τοὺς αὐτὸν ἐκζητοῦντας εὐσεβοφρόνως.

*Ardently go through this (book) and you will receive grace from the abundant assistance from above, sweet soul, you who have Christ in your heart; it will make you act in a dignified and pious way each day. (5) Peruse this book frequently, with a divine thirst to see our Lord calm and benign – may we find him benevolent at the hour of the judgement and may we find the everlasting joy of the chosen people.*

<sup>14</sup> Vassis, p. 343. Due to construction works at the Mega Spilaeon monastery we were not able to obtain a reproduction of this epigram. We have based ourselves on the diplomatic edition of Nikos A. Beès, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des peloponnesischen Klosters Mega Spilaeon* (Leipzig, 1915), p. 12. Apart from tacit adjustments of orthography, accentuation and punctuation, we diverge from this edition in v. 7, where Beès reads ὥραν and in v. 25, where he reads περιττεῖν.

*Let us love them from the bottom of our heart, (10) those people who are close to God. Let us befittingly search the renown of the gentle ones. Let us escape from the passionate attachment to life. Let us place in our mind the desire for them only, whose beauty no one could describe.*

*(15) Remember me, remember me. Please remember me in your prayers, supplicating intensively. Do not disregard the plea of your servant, for I too carry you in the depths of my heart during all my life. (20) May we both find the gift of the better things and the unutterable splendour of the Lord.*

*Those who seek piously after Christ should expect the end of life each day – or rather each hour – and fear constantly the inescapable death and the envy of the enemies. (25) They should give up superfluous matter and weep, and always do whatever is dear to Him.*

This epigram occurs on fol. 202<sup>v</sup> of the *Kalabryt. Meg. Spil.* 12 (eleventh century),<sup>15</sup> which mainly contains Ioannes Klimakos's *Scala Paradisi*. According to Beès, its author might be the βιβλιογράφος or scribe of this particular manuscript. The epigram is an unusually long and fine piece, following almost perfectly the metrical and prosodical rules of the classicizing dodecasyllable: even the dichrona have a correct scansion throughout. There is only one deviation from the usual pattern: the long penultima in δούλου (v. 17).

The poem illustrates how one epigram can belong to several of the categories mentioned above: laudatory, recommendatory, and colophon. At the same time, it establishes a close relationship between author and reader. The latter assumes, unsurprisingly, the role of a devout Christian, and is expressly addressed as 'ψυχὴ γλυκεία, Χριστὸν ὁ στέρνοις φέρων' (v. 3) and included amongst the people receiving ascetic advice: 'τοὺς αὐτὸν ἐκζητοῦντας εὐσεβοφρόνως' (v. 27).

The poem falls into four equal parts. As in many other recommendatory epigrams,<sup>16</sup> the usefulness of the book is stressed at the beginning (vv. 1–6).<sup>17</sup> The Byzantine reader

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Beès, *Mega Spilaeon*, pp. 11–14.

<sup>16</sup> Compare, for example, 'Εἰληφε τέρμα βίβλος ἡγλαΐσμένη' (Vassis, p. 185). This epigram appears on fol. 185<sup>v</sup> of the *Var. Bibl. Ap.* 1650 (a. 1037). It is edited by Peter Schreiner, 'Notizie sulla storia della chiesa greca in Italia in manoscritti greci', in *La Chiesa greca in Italia dall' VII al XVI secolo. Atti del Convegno storico interecclesiale (Bari, 30 apr. – 4 magg. 1969)* (Padua, 1972–1973), p. 895. See also 'Γλυκεῖς φοιτητὰς Ἰησοῦ τοῦ πραέος' (Vassis, p. 120), in the *Moden. Est. gr.* II C 4 (eleventh century), fol. 24<sup>r</sup>. It is edited by Vittorio Puntoni, 'Indice dei codici greci della Bibliotheca Estense di Modena', *SIFC*, 4 (1896): pp. 433–434. In this poem, the text is called an ἵαμα ψυχικῶν ἀλγημάτων.

<sup>17</sup> Maltese characterizes this focus on ἡ ὠφέλεια or τὸ χρησίμων as 'un'ideologia strumentale, utilitaristica': Maltese, 'Tra lettori', p. 141; the book has to be productive for our vision of the world, for the progress of our knowledge and particularly for our moral improvement (in a nutshell: 'si legge per ricevere').

indeed expected a book to be βιωφελής<sup>18</sup> and particularly ψυχωφελής,<sup>19</sup> 'useful for the soul'. The repeated imperative διέρχου ταῦτα strongly urges the addressee to read the book: it will bring him great benefit, since he will learn how to act piously ἄξιως δρᾶν εὐσεβῶς' (v. 4).

Interestingly, the author of the epigram addresses his reader in the exhortative first person plural from v. 7 onwards, thus associating himself with his audience. He spurs them on to imitate the saints (vv. 7–14), who are described in laudatory terms. Although the author of the main text of the manuscript, Ioannes Klimakos, is nowhere explicitly mentioned, it seems obvious that he belongs to the exemplary saints.

At the centre of the poem the author emphatically begs the reader to remember him (vv. 15–21, see the triple repetition of μέμνησο), which is typical for scribal epigrams, as is his self-designation as a δοῦλος in v. 17. It is only one of the manifold humble epithets scribes use to denote themselves and their ταπεινότης.<sup>20</sup> Less common – albeit not unique – is the reciprocity of the remembrance (vv. 18–19), leading to an alliance of scribe and reader in the face of the final judgement: εὐροιμεν ἄμφω ... (see already ὦρα δίκης, v. 7).

The poem concludes with a long gnomic sentence (vv. 22–27), triggered by the reference to the expectation of death (ζωῆς τέλος, v. 22). Here, the reader is associated with the Christian community at large, as he is included in the third person.

### The Path to Asceticism<sup>21</sup>

Φίλε ὅστις εἶ·  
ὀρθὰς φύλαττε τοῦ νοός σου τὰς τρίβους  
καὶ κοιλίαν δάμαζε καὶ γλώσσαν πλέσον  
καὶ τὴν στενὴν δίωκε τοῦ βίου πύλην  
καὶ φεύγε κόσμον καὶ νέος γενοῦ γέρων.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the remark on fol. 35<sup>r</sup> of the *Vindobon. Theol. gr.* 287 (sixteenth century): Χρήσιμον ἵνα εἰ βιωφελής ἐστιν ἡ συγγραφή μάθωμεν. The full text is edited and commented upon by Johannes Diethart and Christian Gastgeber, 'Sechs eindringliche Hinweise für den Byzantinischen Leser aus der Kommentarliteratur zu Dionysios Thrax', *BZ*, 86/87 (1993–1994): pp. 386–401.

<sup>19</sup> Ψυχωφελής has become the standard term in recent scholarly works such as Cavallo, *Leggere a Bisanzio*, and Maltese, 'Tra lettori'. Several alternatives can be found in eleventh-century book epigrams: ζωηφόρος, πλουτοποιός, ψυχοκέρδης and ψυχοτρόφος.

<sup>20</sup> The notion has especially been discussed by Carl Wendel, 'Die ταπεινότης des griechischen Schreibermönches', *BZ*, 43 (1950): pp. 259–266. Typical epithets are ἄθλιος, ἁμαρτωλός, ἄχρεϊος, εὐτελής, οἰκτρός, παμβέβηλος, πενιχρός, πτωχός, τάλας and ταπεινός. Cf. also Ernst Gamillscheg, 'Struktur und Aussagen der Subskriptionen griechischer Handschriften', in E. Condello and G. De Gregorio (eds), *Scribi e colofoni. Le sottoscrizioni di copisti dalle origini all'avvento della stampa* (Spoleto, 1995), pp. 418–419; Hunger, *Schreiben und Lesen*, p. 93, pp. 97–98.

<sup>21</sup> Vassis, p. 545.



*Dear friend, whoever you are:  
Keep the paths of your mind straight,  
subdue your belly, and your tongue even more.  
Seek after the narrow gate of life (Mt 7: 13–14),  
flee from the world and become a new old man.*

This epigram is to be found on fol. 148<sup>v</sup> of the *Vatic. Barberin. gr.* 70<sup>22</sup> (eleventh century), which contains the lexicon *Etymologicum Gudianum*.<sup>23</sup> It shows close similarity to the epigram ‘ὀρθὰς φύλαττε τοῦ νοός σου τὰς φρένας’, which may have been written in the eleventh century by a certain Eustathios of Ikonion.<sup>24</sup> A longer version (ten verses) occurs in the *Lesbiens. monast. Iohann. Theol.* 23<sup>25</sup> (fourteenth century), which mainly contains the work of Symeon Thessalonicensis.

The general moralizing statements, expressed in the four perfect dodecasyllables, bear no relationship to the (contents of the) preceding main text. They turn up at the end of the manuscript, along with some verses from the second book of the *Iliad* (II, 494–511) and a monostich also appearing in the *Anthologia Palatina* (AP I, 6). The latter is written in majuscules and inscribed in an adorned table. The heterogeneous nature of these verses suggests that the scribe wanted to use up the remaining space on fol. 148.<sup>26</sup> It is not self-evident, then, to consider our tetrastich as a book epigram. It is only by adding the address ‘Φίλε ὅστις εἶ’ that the scribe appropriates the abstract sayings and explicitly establishes a communication with the reader.

The maxims are too general to recognize any specific teachings,<sup>27</sup> apart from the one trite allusion to Matthew. They obviously adhere to an ascetic ideal, which

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Valentinus Capocci, *Codices Barberiniani Graeci. Codices 1–163* (Vatican City, 1958), p. 76, with indication of the first and last verses.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Alberto Cellerini, *Introduzione all’Etymologicum Gudianum* (Rome, 1989); Stefano Maleci, *Il codice Barberiniano Graecus 70 dell’Etymologicum Gudianum* (Rome, 1995); Richard Reitzenstein, *Geschichte der griechischen Etymologika: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philologie in Alexandria und Byzanz* (Amsterdam, 1964).

<sup>24</sup> Vassis, p. 545, an epigram from the *Laur. Plut.* 60.20 (eleventh century), which contains Eusebios Pamphilus’ *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In this codex it is titled ‘Εὐσταθίου ποίημα τοῦ Ἰκονίου’. A diplomatic edition of the poem can be found in Angelo Maria Bandini, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae varia continens opera graecorum patrum* t. II (Leipzig, 1961), p. 679.

<sup>25</sup> The poem is edited in: Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Μαυρογορδάτειος Βιβλιοθήκη ἥτοι γενικός περιγραφικός κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀνά τήν Ἀνατολήν βιβλιοθήκαις εὐρισκομένων ἐλληνικῶν χειρογράφων* (Constantinople, 1884), pp. 152–153.

<sup>26</sup> For a similar case with New Testament book epigrams, see Wolfram Hörandner, ‘Verse auf die Apostelbriefe und Evangelien’, in E. Trapp and S. Schönauer (eds), *Lexicologica byzantina. Beiträge zum Kolloquium zur byzantinischen Lexikographie* (Bonn, 13.–15. Juli 2007) (Bonn, 2008), p. 83: ‘Der Sammler – er war vermutlich mit dem Kopisten identisch – (...) wollte den Platz in der Handschrift nicht ungenützt lassen’.

<sup>27</sup> The poem shows some similarities to ‘Εἴπερ κατέγνως ἀτρεκῶς ἀμαρτάδος’ (Vassis, p. 192), which is dedicated to Ioannes Klimakos. This epigram appears on fol. 213<sup>r</sup> of the *Ambros.*

is summarized in the last imperative: one should try to become another γέρων. The oxymoronical juxtaposition of νέος and γέρων may be a reference to the desert fathers; at the same time it may express the common motif of the *puer senex*.<sup>28</sup> The word γέρων is also stressed typographically in the manuscript: it is written vertically and in an imitation of majuscules.

### On Finishing the Gospel<sup>29</sup>

Ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν πραγμάτων ἀγγελία  
 εἴληφε τέλος μηνὶ τῷ δεκεμβρίῳ·  
 ἡμέρα μὲν ἦν τέτρας τῆς ἐβδομάδος  
 ἱνδικτος ἀνύουσα δὲ ἡ δευτέρα·  
 χειρὶ γραφεῖσα εὐτελοῦς πρεσβυτέρου 5  
 Συνεσίου τοῦ νομα, πάντων ἐσχάτου.  
 ὅσοι δὲ Χριστοῦ ὑποκύπτοντες νόμῳ  
 † κ' ἐν ᾧ † ἐκ πόθου σπουδαίως μελετῶντες,  
 εὐχεσθε αὐτῷ τῷ ταλανὶ πρεσβύτῃ,  
 ὅπως διὰ τῶν ὑμῶν εὐχῶν παράσχοι 10  
 Χριστὸς αὐτ' ἄφεσιν πολλῶν ὀφλημάτων·  
 ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς μισθὸν λήψῃσθε πάντες  
 παρ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ αἵροντος τὰς ἁμαρτίας.

*The tidings of good deeds have come to an end in the month December. It was the fourth day of the week, and the second year of the current indiction. They were written by the hand of the humble presbyter called Synesius, the lowest of all.*

*All of you who bow to the law of Christ and pursue it diligently out of desire, pray for this miserable priest, so that by your prayers Christ may grant him remission of his many debts, and that all of you too obtain a reward of him who takes away the sins.*

gr. A 152 sup. (eleventh century). It is edited by Bentein et al., 'Book epigrams', pp. 289–290.

<sup>28</sup> See Thomas Pratsch, *Der hagiographische Topos: Griechische Heiligenviten in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit* (Berlin, 2005), pp. 88–90.

<sup>29</sup> Vassis, p. 323. This epigram has been previously edited by Victor Gardthausen, *Griechische Palaeographie* (Leipzig, 1913), p. 435. We diverge from this edition in v. 12, where Gardthausen normalizes the manuscript reading λήψῃσθε into λήψεσθε. The verb form λήψῃσθε (an aorist subjunctive formed with the future stem, or a future subjunctive) evidently does not exist in Attic Greek. However, Emile Renauld, *Etude de la langue et du style de Michel Psellos* (Paris, 1920), p. 71 mentions similar forms in the works of Psellos (for example the aorist 'ἐτέθνηξα').

This epigram occurs on fol. 285<sup>r</sup> of the *Londin. Addit. gr.* 17470<sup>30</sup> (a. 1033), which contains the Four Gospels. The epigram has been ‘recycled’ by the scribe, since an earlier *evangeliarion*, the *Ambros. gr.* H 13 sup. (dated by Martini and Bassi to the end of the tenth century) contains exactly the same epigram, except for the name and the date, of course.<sup>31</sup>

The poem is written in loose dodecasyllables: it neglects all prosodical rules and accepts hiatus frequently. It displays several characteristics of scribal epigrams (colophon verses): it appears at the end of the manuscript, indicates the subject and the time of writing (in a quite detailed manner) and mentions the name of the scribe (Synesios),<sup>32</sup> together with some humble epithets. The latter half (vv. 7–13) directly addresses the reader, who is begged for a prayer that will redeem both scribe and reader from sin (see the two conjunctions ‘ὅπως’ (v. 10) and ‘ἵνα’ (v. 13)). This reference to the self-interest of the reader in praying for the scribe is less common in book epigrams.

In scribal epigrams, scribes often ask their reader directly or indirectly for recognition of their labour. Although they usually characterize themselves as the lowest of all men, they seem to have been well aware of the merits and the usefulness of their work.<sup>33</sup> But scribes were not the only participants in the book production who expected due recognition, as the two following poems show.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Henri Omont, ‘Notes sur les manuscrits grecs du British Museum’, *Bibliothèque de l’école des Chartes*, 45 (1884): p. 40.

<sup>31</sup> Edited by Emidio Martini and Domenico Bassi, *Catalogus codicum graecorum Bibliothecae Ambrosianae* (Milan, 1906), p. 503: Εἰληφε τέλος μηνὶ σεπτεμβρίῳ πρώτῃ / Ἡμέρα μὲν ἦν πρώτη τῆς ἐβδομάδος / Ἰνδικτος δὲ ἀνύουσα ἡ Τρίτῃ / Χεὶρὶ γραφεῖσα εὐτελοῦς πρεσβυτέρου, / Ἀντωνίῳ [sic] τούνομα. Unlike the eleventh-century version, the poem in the Milanese manuscript presents several verses with more or fewer than twelve syllables (vv. 2, 4, 6, 9). On the other hand, the two versions share the problematic readings κ’ ἐν ἡ (v. 8 – we remain puzzled) and αὐτ’ (v. 11 – which we have hesitantly accentuated as the elided form of αὐτε). Most probably, both versions go back to an earlier (and better?) ‘original’.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Ernst Gamillscheg and Dieter Harlfinger, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800–1600. I. Teil: Handschriften aus Bibliotheken Grossbritanniens* (Vienna, 1981), p. 185, no. 370; Marie Vogel and Victor Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (Leipzig, 1909), p. 411.

<sup>33</sup> Claudia Rapp, who has recently studied the relationship between the holiness of the text (i.e. the Scriptures) and the holiness of the scribe, gives similar observations. She comes to the conclusion that the pious scribal activity was held in high esteem for a twofold reason: by copying the text, the scribe not only immersed himself in the holy text (*lectio divina*) but also disseminated the Christian message to a larger public: Claudia Rapp, ‘Holy Texts, Holy Men, and Holy Scribes’, in W.E. Klingshirm (ed.), *The Early Christian Book* (Washington, 2007), pp. 194–222 (esp. pp. 208–219).

Hail to the Commissioner<sup>34</sup>

Εὐαγγελιστῶν τοὺς θεοπνεύστους λόγους,  
τομαῖς διαιρεθέντας εὐεπιβόλοις  
καὶ τῇδε βίβλῳ τεχνικῶς ἡρμοσμένους,  
ἅπας ἀκούων καὶ τρυφῶν καθ' ἡμέραν  
ἔστῶσιν ὥσιν τοὺς ὑποφωνουμένους, 5  
Νικόλαον θαύμαζε τῆς εὐβουλίας,  
τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον τὸν προρηθέντα,  
σπούδασμα πολλοῖς οὐ πρὶν ἐσπουδασμένον  
καὶ σπουδάσαντα συντόνως προθυμίαις  
καὶ καλλιεργήσαντα κόσμοις ποικίλοις 10  
τοῖς μὲν ξενίζει τοὺς ὀρώντας ὡς ἔχει,  
τοῖς τοῦ Θεοῦ δὲ ῥήμασιν ψυχοτρόφοις  
εὐεργετεῖ ἅπαντας ἀκρωμένους.

*Here are the inspired words of the evangelists, divided into convenient parts and skilfully set in order in this book. Whoever hears and enjoys them each day, (5) listening with ears cocked as they are pronounced, admire Nikolaos for his prudence, the same bishop who has been named before. He has eagerly and zealously produced a work which has not been produced by many before, (10) and he has adorned it with various ornaments. With the latter, he astonishes those who look at its quality, and with the soul feeding words of God he does good service to all listeners.*

This epigram can be found on fol. 185<sup>v</sup>–186<sup>r</sup> of the *Vatic. gr.* 1650<sup>35</sup> (a. 1037). It is accompanied by two other epigrams, “Ἡ πηγὴ ὧδε τῶν μαθητῶν τοῦ λόγου” and “Ἐνταῦθα τὴν θέλγουσαν εἰκότως λύραν”.<sup>36</sup> Reading the first verse, one would expect the *Vaticanus* to contain the Four Gospels. This is not (or no longer)<sup>37</sup> the case, however: it has the *Acts of*

<sup>34</sup> Vassis, p. 263. Our text is based on the editions of Giuseppe Mercati, *Nuove note di letteratura biblica e cristiana antica* (Vatican City, 1941), pp. 75–76 and Schreiner, ‘Notizie’, pp. 895–896. Enrica Follieri has made a critical edition of the epigram based on six manuscripts, cf. Enrica Follieri, ‘Epigrammi sugli evangelisti dai codici Barberiniani greci 352 e 520’, *BBGG*, 10 (1956): p. 156. Our version follows the Vatican manuscript (except for v. 11, where we read, with the other mss, τοῖς μὲν instead of τοὺς μὲν) and diverges from Follieri in v. 5 (ὥσι), v. 7 (added in our ms), v. 9 (συντόνοις), v. 11 (ξενίζειν, ἔχοι), v. 12 (ῥήμασι) and v. 13 (εὐεργετεῖν).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Ciro Giannelli, *Codices Vaticani graeci: codices 1485–1683* (Vatican City, 1950), pp. 370–373.

<sup>36</sup> Vassis, p. 316 and p. 235. Cf. Mercati, *letterature biblica e cristiana*, pp. 75–76; Schreiner, ‘Notizie’, pp. 895–896.

<sup>37</sup> Mercati, *letterature biblica e cristiana*, pp. 53–54, holds it possible that the *Vaticanus* 1650 once contained the Four Gospels too, which got lost. Our epigram would then refer only to this lost part of the manuscript.

the *Apostles*, the *Catholic Letters* and *Paul's Letters* (with commentary). Most likely, the epigram was copied from another manuscript without any major modifications. Similar versions can be found in several other manuscripts,<sup>38</sup> among which three eleventh-century *evangelitaria*: *Laurent. gr.* Plut. 6.18, *Mosquens. olim Synod.* 44 (Vlad. 86) and *Barberin. gr.* 520.

The epigram focuses on a certain Nikolaos 'who has produced a unique work and has beautifully adorned it' (vv. 7–9). Expressions such as σπουδάσαντα and καλλιεργήσαντα can refer either to the executor or (when the verbs are taken in a causative sense) to the commissioner,<sup>39</sup> yet, in the case of the *Vaticanus* 1650, there is no doubt that the latter interpretation is right, since the colophon<sup>40</sup> tells us that the manuscript was written by the scribe Theodoros,<sup>41</sup> surnamed κληρικὸς Σικελιώτης, and commissioned by the Sicilian bishop Nikolaos.<sup>42</sup> This colophon, preceding the book epigram, explains the referential words in v. 7 (τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον τὸν προρηθέντα), the only verse which is specific to our version of the poem. Incidentally, it is also the only verse with blatant prosodic errors (long ε and twice long ο); the rest of the poem has only mistakes in the treatment of dichrona (v. 2) and, tellingly, in the proper name Νικόλαον. On palaeographical grounds, Gamillscheg has suggested that the bishop wrote this dedicatory epigram by his own hand.<sup>43</sup> If this is true, the innovations with regard to the model epigram do not prove Nikolaos to have been a perfect metrist.

The general tone of the epigram also concords with the fact that Nikolaos is not the scribe, and that we are dealing not with a scribal but with a dedicatory epigram. The latter is much more direct in its praise, as Treu<sup>44</sup> states: 'Die Rangabstufung zwischen Schreiber und Besteller zeigt sich subjektiv darin, daß sich der Schreiber mit den verschiedensten Demutsbezeichnungen belegt, den Besteller dagegen mit Ehrentiteln auszeichnet'. Throughout the epigram the public is reminded several times of the benefit they receive thanks to the εὐβουλία of Nikolaos (cf. εὐεργετεῖν, ψυχοτρόφοις, τρυφῶν), who makes a strong appeal for recognition (v. 6: θαύμαζε).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Follieri, 'Epigrammi sugli evangelisti'.

<sup>39</sup> Compare, for example, with 'Πάλαι σε δῶρον ἐκ Θεοῦ, θεηγόρε' (Vassis, p. 591). This epigram appears on fol. 3<sup>v</sup> of *Paris. gr.* 533, and mentions another Nikolaos who has 'put the golden words (of Gregorios of Nazianze) into this book'. The epigram is edited by George Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus* (Princeton, 1969), p. 238, who convincingly argues that Nikolaos is not the scribe, but the commissioner of the manuscript.

<sup>40</sup> Edited by Giannelli, *Codices Vaticani*, p. 372; Mercati, *letterature biblica e cristiana*, p. 76 and Schreiner, 'Notizie', p. 896.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Ernst Gamillscheg, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800–1600. 3. Teil: Handschriften aus Bibliotheken Roms mit dem Vatikan. A. Verzeichnis der Kopisten* (Vienna, 1997), p. 89; Vogel and Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber*, p. 140.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Vera Von Falkenhausen, *Untersuchungen über die byzantinische Herrschaft in Süditalien vom 9. bis ins 11. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1967), p. 147.

<sup>43</sup> Gamillscheg, *Repertorium* 3, p. 89.

<sup>44</sup> Kurt Treu, 'Griechische Schreibernotizen als Quelle für politische, soziale und kulturelle Verhältnisse ihrer Zeit', *BB*, 2 (1966): p. 139.

The public from which a grateful and admiring response is expected, is explicitly defined in v. 4 (ἅπας ἀκούων καὶ τρυφῶν καθ' ἡμέραν), v. 10 (τοὺς ὁρῶντας) and v. 12 (ἅπαντας ἀκρωμένους): the intended audience, then, consists not of readers but of listeners<sup>45</sup> and spectators – the usual public for liturgical books, that is. Unless one assumes that this poem was read aloud at the offices, along with the biblical texts it accompanies – an unlikely assumption – this epigram is an interesting instance of the distinction to be drawn between the addressee, or the hypothetical reader (who in fact is a listener) from whom the recognition is expected, and the real reader. This is not to say, however, that the anticipated reaction of gratitude for the divine words and admiration for the marvellous ornamentation of the manuscript will not have been realized. But gratitude and admiration will have been provoked by the book itself, not by the book epigram.

### Hail to the Corrector<sup>46</sup>

Ὅρθωσις αὐτῆς σφαλμάτων ῥαθυμίας  
 Γεωργίου δ' ἐξ εὐτελοῦς μονοτρόπου  
 ὅς βιβλοφύλαξ τῇσδε τῆς μονῆς πέλει,  
 ᾧ πάντες εὐχὰς προσνέμοιτε γνησίως  
 ἐντυγχάνοντες τῇ βίβλῳ γ' ἀπροκόπως  
 στιγμαῖς τὲ καὶ γράμμασι καὶ προσωδαίαις.

5

*The correction of the rash mistakes due to negligence, comes from Georgios, the humble monk and keeper of the archives of this monastery, to whom you may all truly grant your prayers, you who read this book without stumbling, thanks to the punctuation, letters and prosodic signs.*

<sup>45</sup> For the importance of listening to the text ('aural reading'), cf. Cavallo, *Leggere a Bisanzio*, pp. 61–69; John Lowden, 'Luxury and Liturgy: The Function of Books', in R. Morris (ed.), *Church and People in Byzantium* (Birmingham, 1990), pp. 263–280; Waring, 'Monastic reading', p. 410. Cf. Cavallo, 'Πόλις γραμμάτων', pp. 105–110, for the practice of reading aloud in monastic communities, which had a relatively low level of literacy.

<sup>46</sup> Vassis, p. 546. This epigram has been previously edited by Maria Teresa Rodriguez, *Biblioteca Regionale Universitaria Messina. Catalogo dei manoscritti datati del fondo del S. Salvatore* (Palermo, 1999), p. 16. Rodriguez also gives a reproduction of the folio with the epigram: plate 34. On the basis of this reproduction, we have corrected her text at three instances: she mistakenly reads βιβλιοφύλαξ in v. 3, ᾧ in v. 4 and ἀπροκόπως in v. 5. All three erroneous readings go back to the earlier edition by Giuseppe Fraccaroli, 'Catalogo dei codici greci del Monastero del SS. Salvatore che si conservano nella Biblioteca universitaria di Messina', *SIFC*, 5 (1897): pp. 487–514, p. 500.

This epigram can be found on fol. 168<sup>r</sup> of the *Messanen. S. Salvat. gr.* 71<sup>47</sup> (a. 1064), which contains Ioannes Chrysostomos' *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles*. It follows upon the subscription of the main scribe of the manuscript, Gerasimos<sup>48</sup> (fol. 168<sup>r</sup>). This explains the particle δέ in v. 2, and the referential τῇσδε τῆς μονῆς in v. 3 (that is, the Evergetis monastery at Constantinople).

As the epigram stands at the end of the manuscript and contains the name of one of its collaborators, we can speak of colophon verses. The poem is less usual in so far as it is not written by the scribe, but by the corrector, the librarian Georgios. Despite his humble surname (εὐτελής μονότροπος), Georgios is obviously proud of his useful work, for which he asks the reader prayers in return. His own verses are not free from 'rash mistakes', though: the prosody is not correct (there are erroneous long scansion in v. 3 βιβλοφύλαξ and v. 6 γράμμασι), and in order to stick to the dodecasyllable, v. 3 has the unusual βιβλοφύλαξ without iota.<sup>49</sup>

One may relate this epigram with the much more common type in which the scribe asks his reader for forgiveness for his bad writing,<sup>50</sup> as in *Vatic. gr.* 866 where the scribe has added Εὐχέσθε, αἰτῶ, κάμοι τῷ κακιγράφῳ (with the meaningful κακιγράφῳ<sup>51</sup> instead of καλλιγράφῳ).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Rodriguez, *Biblioteca Regionale Universitaria Messina*, pp. 15–17.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Vogel and Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber*, p. 65. Both collaborators of the book left their mark already earlier in the manuscript, on fol. 47<sup>r</sup>, where Gerasimos has written 'ὁ μετερχόμενος, μέμνησο πρὸς Κύριον καὶ τοῦ γράψαντος Γερασίμου μοναχοῦ' and Georgios 'καὶ τοῦ ὀρθώσαντος Γεωργίου εὐτελοῦς μοναχοῦ'. Cf. Rodriguez, *Biblioteca Regionale Universitaria Messina*, p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> LBG has one example for βιβλοφυλακέω and one for βιβλοθήκη. A TLG on-line search (June 2009) gives two more examples for βιβλοθήκη, and two (from Photios) for βιβλοθηκάριος.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Hunger, *Schreiben und Lesen*, p. 96, p. 125. Kurt Treu associates this awareness of human shortcomings during the act of writing ('Wer schreibt, schreibt falsch') with the humble epithets of the scribes: Treu, 'Griechische Schreibernotizen', pp. 127–143, pp. 140–141.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Erich Trapp, *Lexikon zur Byzantinischen Gräzität besonders des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts*, I. Band A-K (Vienna, 2001), p. 736.



Byzantine Riddling: Who am I?<sup>52</sup>

Ἐτελειώθη σὺν θεῷ καὶ τὸ παρὸν πτυκτίον  
 τὸ πόνημα, τὸ σύγγραμμα, ἡ εὐτελής Διόπτρα,  
 διὰ χειρὸς ἀμαρτωλοῦ μοναχοῦ τῆ καὶ ξένου  
 μηνὶ μαΐῳ δώδεκα ἰνδικτιῶνος τρίτης·  
 κύκλος σελήνης δέκατος, ἡλίου εἰκάς τρίτη  
 ἔτους ἐξάκις χίλια καὶ ἑξακὸς πρὸς τούτοις,  
 πρὸς δὲ καὶ τρία ἔτερα ἐπὶ τούτοις τυγχάνει.  
 ἂν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦμὸν μαθεῖν ἐθέλῃς, φίλε,  
 ἰδοὺ καὶ τοῦτο γράφω σοι καὶ ψηφίσας εὐρήσεις·

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ὀκτὼ γράμματα ἔχω καὶ εἰσὶν ἄμφω ἀπέντε·  
 τρισύλλαβός εἰμι, νόει με· αἱ δύο πρῶται  
 ἅνὰ δύο γράμματα ἔχει ἑκάστη, ἡ λοιπὴ δὲ τα λοιπὰ·  
 τοῦ παντὸς δὲ ὁ ἀριθμὸς ἑκατοντάδες τρίς τὸ τρίς  
 καὶ δεκάδες δις τετράκις· ἦγουν ὁ πᾶς  
 ψήφος τούτων ἑννακὸς ὀγδοήκοντα.

*With the help of God the present book has also been finished – this work, this book, the modest Dioptra – by the hand of a sinful monk and stranger. It was finished on the twelfth of May, in the third year of the current indiction. It was the tenth year of the cycle of the moon and the twenty-third year of the solar cycle, in the year six thousand six hundred and three. If you want to learn my name, dear friend, behold I describe this too for you and you will find it by calculating.*

*I have eight letters and five consonants. I am composed of three syllables, recognize me. The first two syllables each have two letters. The last syllable has the remaining ones. On the whole the numerical value is: three times three hundred and four times twenty, or, the total sum of those: nine hundred and eighty.*

<sup>52</sup> Vassis, p. 260 (he surprisingly indicates that the poem has 13 verses). Slightly different versions of this epigram have been preserved in three manuscripts: the *Vindobon. Theol. gr.* 193, the *Athon. Lauras* Ω 17 and the *Athon. Vatoped.* 165. The version of the *Vindobon. Theol. gr.* 193 has been previously edited by Josef Bick, *Die Schreiber der Wiener griechischen Handschriften* (Vienna, 1920), pp. 113–114. Earlier editions by De Montfaucon (1708) and Graux (1880) had given only the first part, the nine verses. For the versions of the two other manuscripts we refer to the catalogues by Eustratiades and Lauriotes, *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts*, pp. 326–327 and Sophronios Eustratiades, *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts in the library of the monastery of Vatopedi on Mt. Athos* (Cambridge, 1924), p. 39. A critical edition based on all three manuscripts is being prepared by Eirini Afentoulidou (forthcoming). The second part of the text (from verse 8 on, the riddle on the author's name) has been preserved in a laudatory book epigram by Konstantinos Bestes Granatos, also to be published in Afentoulidou's forthcoming edition of the *Dioptra*.



This text occurs on fol. 174<sup>r</sup> of *Vindobon. theol. gr.* 193,<sup>53</sup> which contains the *Dioptra* of Philippos Monotropos. Since De Montfaucon, the *Vindobonensis* was thought to be an eleventh-century manuscript because of the date in this epigram (the year 6603 = 1095),<sup>54</sup> and the poem was considered as an autograph of the author, Philippos himself. Based on palaeographical arguments, however, this early date has been rejected:<sup>55</sup> Hunger recently dated the manuscript to the beginning of the thirteenth century. Therefore we should call this an eleventh-century epigram ‘by extension’, as it was originally written in 1095 but no longer occurs in an eleventh-century manuscript. The many orthographical errors in the manuscript may be due to the transmission, but another notable feature of the epigram, its use of the political verse, must be original. It is a rare metre in eleventh-century book epigrams.<sup>56</sup> The choice can be naturally explained when taking into consideration that the *Dioptra* is composed in the same metre. What is more, the colophon epigram borrows some clauses and complete verses from the main work itself, more specifically in the detailed chronology (day, month, indiction, moon cycle, sun cycle and year).<sup>57</sup>

At first sight the epigram may seem a typical scribal epigram,<sup>58</sup> containing information about the contents of the manuscript, its scribe and date of writing, but it actually is not, or not only, about the scribe, as becomes evident only once the reader, who is playfully addressed as ‘φίλε’, has solved the numerical riddle and gets to know the name of the sinful monk who designates himself as a ξένος.<sup>59</sup> The passage in prose (or in awkward metrical attempts), from line 10 on, indicates the number of letters, syllables and consonants in his name,<sup>60</sup> and also mentions the numerical value of the letters,

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Herbert Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften des Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Teil 3/2: Codices Theologici 101–200* (Vienna, 1984), pp. 411ff.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Bernard De Montfaucon, *Palaeographia Graeca* (Paris, 1708), p. 54. For the same reason, Eustratiades and Spyridon Lauriotès dated *Athon. Lauras* Ω 17 equally to the year 1095. It seems very likely that this date should be rejected too.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Charles Graux, ‘Un prétendu bombycinus de l’an 1095’, *RPh*, 4 (1880): pp. 87–88; Gardthausen, *Griechische Palaeographie*, p. 440; Bick, *Die Schreiber*, p. 113–114.

<sup>56</sup> Our original database (eleventh century) had 520 epigrams in dodecasyllables, thirty-five in dactylic hexameters, only seven in political verse, and another seven in elegiacs.

<sup>57</sup> *Dioptra* book 4, 520–521. See the contribution by Eirini Afentoulidou in this volume, with a discussion of the chronology. See also Venance Grumel, ‘Remarques sur la *Dioptra* de Philippe le Solitaire’, *BZ*, 44 (1951): pp. 198–211, specifically p. 200.

<sup>58</sup> Compare with the following epigram: ‘Ετελειώθη σὺν θεῷ ἡ θεία δέλτος αὐτῇ / διὰ χειρὸς Νικηφόρου πρεσβυτέρου τοῦ Χρυσοῦ’. This epigram occurs in *Vatic. gr.* 259 (a. 1054), fol. 297. It is edited by Henry Stevenson, *Codices manuscripti Palatini Graeci* (Rome, 1885), p. 142. There is no reference in Vassis.

<sup>59</sup> There may be a conscious ambiguity in this use of the word ξένος, as it can both refer to the provisional anonymity of the monk and be taken in its well-known Christian meaning of stranger to this world, i.e. a synonym for monk.

<sup>60</sup> The exact meaning of the sentence on the first two syllables is not unproblematic, and has been complicated by Bick’s interpretation of the Greek word following αἱ δύο πρώται. The manuscript reads ἄν with another α above the ν. We have kept it in its most obvious reading, as ἄνά,

according to the principle of *isopsephia*.<sup>61</sup> The name we are looking for turns out to be that of Philippos himself, the author of the *Dioptra* – who may have written the original manuscript himself. An authorial-scribal epigram, it would seem then.

### On a Beautiful Psalter<sup>62</sup>

Ἴσως βλέπων τις τήνδε τὴν σοφὴν βίβλον  
 πολυτελῶς μὲν ἐντὸς ἡγλαϊσμένην  
 παγκοσμίως δ' ἔξωθεν ὠραϊσμένην,  
 ἐγκαλέσειε τῷ πόθῳ τετευχότι  
 μάλιστα δ' ὄντι καὶ μοναστῇ τὸν τρόπον  
 ὡς δὴ περιττὰ ταῦτα κακίζειν θέλων.  
 “τί γάρ” τυχὸν φράσειε “χρυσὸς εἰς βίον,  
 καὶ λεπτότητες ὑμένων καὶ γραμμάτων  
 καὶ χρυσομορφόγραφος αὐτῶν ἰδέα  
 ἐξ ἀργύρου τε κλειῖθρα κεχρυσωμένα  
 καὶ φαιδρόμορφον ἄμφιον τοῦ βιβλίου;  
 ὄνησιν εἰσφέροιεν εἰς ἀσκουμένους”.  
 ἀλλ' ἄνπερ ἦ τέλειος ὅς ταῦτα βλέπει,  
 οὐ στήσεται γε μέχρι τῶν ὀρωμένων

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with a distributive meaning: ‘the first two syllables *each* have two letters’. In this interpretation, the author of the epigram would have his name split as φι-λι-ππος. However strange the latter syllable might seem, this interpretation is the most economical one, and is most in line with the Byzantine practice, see Jacques Noret, ‘Les règles byzantines de la division en syllabes’, *Byz*, 77 (2007): pp. 345–348. Bick, on the other hand, suggested to read ἀν[αφων]α ... γράμματα, apparently with the (not attested) meaning of ἄφωνα, ‘consonants’ – as in the preceding phonetic spelling ἄμφωνα. If this were true, it would imply that the first two syllables each have two consonants, and that we split the name in the following, highly unlikely way: φιλ-ιππ-ος. Moreover, why say that the remaining syllable has τὰ λοιπά, plural, if there is only one consonant left? The other versions of the same epigram, mentioned in note 52, offer a different division of the syllables, while confirming the reading ἀνὰ: instead of αἱ δύο πρῶται ἀνὰ δύο γράμματα ἔχει ἑκάστη, the mss *Athos. Lauras* Ω 17 and *Athos. Vatoped.* 165 read ἡ ὑστάτη καὶ μέση ἀνὰ τρία γράμματα ἔχει ἑκάστη (‘the last and middle syllable each have three letters’). This reflects another view on how to split Philippos’ name correctly: φι-λιπ-πος. The poem of Konstantinos Bestes Granatos concords with the version of the Athonite manuscripts.

<sup>61</sup> φ = 500, ι = 10, twice, λ = 30, π = 80, twice, ο = 70, ζ = 200. The other way around – starting from the sum without knowing the name, as the hypothetical ignorant reader is challenged to do – is less easy.

<sup>62</sup> Vassis, p. 368. This epigram has been previously edited by Thomas Gaisford, *Catalogus sive notitia manuscriptorum qui a cel. E.D. Clarke comparati in Bibliotheca Bodleiana adservantur* (Oxford, 1812), pp. 59–60. We diverge from this edition in v. 15 (ὀυδεγχορνοῖσει) and v. 26 (θηράσω). The edition by Georgi Parpulov, *Toward a History of Byzantine Psalters* (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Chicago, Illinois, 2004), pp. 183–184, was inaccessible to us when we were writing this article.

- οὐδ' ἐγγρονίσει τῇ κάτω θεωρίᾳ· 15  
 κὰν οὐκ ἀπεικὸς τὸν μέγαν ὑμνογράφον  
 τὸν πάνσοφον νοῦν καὶ καθαυραῖσμένον  
 καὶ τοῖσδε κοσμεῖν τοῖς ὕλικοις ἐκ πόθου.  
 ἀλλ' ἥ μὲν ἐχρῆν θαυμάσει καὶ τὰς ὕλας  
 ὡς κτίσμα καὶ ποίημα τοῦ παντεργάτου 20  
 ὃς πάντα ποιεῖ πανσθενῶς καὶ πανσόφως·  
 ἄργυρον ἐκ γῆς ὑμένας δ' ἐκ ποιμνίων  
 ἐκ δ' αὖ γε σιρῶν καὶ βαφῆς θαλαττίας  
 ὕφασμα λαμπρόμορφον ἡγλαῖσμένον·  
 ὅλον δὲ τὸν νοῦν ἐμβαθύνας τοῖς ἔσω 25  
 τοῦς ψυχοκερδεῖς θηράσει μόνον λόγους  
 καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς ἐνδιατρήψει πλέον,  
 τρυγῶν ἀληθῶς ψυχικὴν σωτηρίαν  
 καὶ τὴν ἄνω φέρουσιν ἀπλανῆ τρίβον  
 εὐθυβόλῳ μάλιστα βαδίζων τάχει. 30

*Maybe someone looking at this book of wisdom, which is expensively ornamented on the inside and beautifully adorned on the outside, could blame the one who has made it out of desire – (5) especially since he is a monk in his way of life – as he wants to condemn these things as vain. He might say: ‘Of what interest is gold for life, and the delicacy of parchment and letters and their gold-written appearance, (10) and the clasps gilded with silver and the splendid wrap of the book? They should be useful to the ascetics.’*

*Yet, if the one who looks at these things is truly accomplished, he will not stop at the visible things (15) nor will he linger over the earthly contemplation (even if it is not out of place to honour out of desire the great Psalmist, that very wise and beautiful mind, also with these material things). No, he will befittingly admire the material things too, (20) as a creation and an artefact of the creator of the universe, who makes all things with great might and wisdom: silver from the earth, parchment from sheep, beautifully adorned textile from silkworms and the dye from the sea. (25) And as he will have immersed his whole mind in the inner part, he will only seek after the salutary words and he will spend more time with the prayers. In doing so he will truly reap the salvation of the soul, and he will most definitely (30) walk with steady speed the straight path leading upwards.*

This recommendatory epigram occurs on fols 7<sup>v</sup>–9<sup>r</sup> of the Psalter manuscript *Oxon. Clarke* 15,<sup>63</sup> which was copied by a certain Μάρκος μοναχός.<sup>64</sup> The small manuscript (it measures only 10.2 by 8.8 cm) is very luxurious (Hutter called it a *Luxustaschenbuchausgabe des Psalters*).<sup>65</sup> The poem itself is also of high quality in all respects: it is written in a beautiful majuscule, in an almost impeccable orthography (except for v. 14: στήσετέ); it applies the metrical and prosodical rules correctly (except for the *dichrona*), and its elegant literary composition betrays an accomplished man of letters.

The poem can be divided into five equal parts, each consisting of six verses. In the first one, the author introduces a hypothetical spectator (βλέπων τις) blaming the ascetic producer of the luxurious manuscript (τῷ πόθῳ τετευχότι: the scribe? the commissioner? the owner? the poet himself? – see below) for these superfluous embellishments. The second part (vv. 7–12) is a rhetorical πρόληψις: an anticipation of the expected criticism in direct speech. The poet responds to this criticism from v. 13 onward, by introducing a second possible viewer response, that of the ‘ideal (τέλειος, v. 13) reader/spectator’. This response will be threefold:

- vv. 13–18: he will not stick (οὐ στήσεται γέ) to the visible things, although he is aware of the fact that the material embellishment is in itself perfectly acceptable (a rhetorical ἀντιληψις);
- vv. 19–24: rather, he will on the one hand (ἀλλ’ ἢ μὲν ἐχρήν) consider all things material as iconically referring to their divine creator – a view typical of the iconophile Byzantine mind;
- vv. 25–30: and on the other hand (ὅλον δὲ τὸν νοῦν) he will fully concentrate on the inner (ἔσω) and upper (ἄνω) aspects, the salutary (ψυχοκερδεῖς) words contained in this (admittedly beautiful) book.<sup>66</sup>

In short, this poem presents a balanced judgement on the possible responses to this beautiful book.<sup>67</sup> Although evoking a ‘spiritual response’ seems to be the major goal of

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Irmgard Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften* (Stuttgart, 1977), pp. 32 ff.

<sup>64</sup> On this Psalter and Mark the Monk, see the contribution by Marc Lauxtermann in this volume; see also Vogel and Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber*, p. 291.

<sup>65</sup> Hutter, *byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften*, p. 32.

<sup>66</sup> The antithesis between the earthly (κάτω θεωρία, v. 15) and the heavenly contemplation (ἄνω φέρουσαν τρίβον, v. 29) appears in many other book epigrams such as ‘Πρόνυμα χρυσέρεθρον ἔνθεον πάννυ’ (Vassis, p. 638). This epigram appears on fol. 361<sup>v</sup> of the *Athous Kausokal.* 1 (eleventh century), and is edited by Sophronios Eustratiades and Eulogios Kourilas, *Κατάλογος τῶν κωδίκων τῆς Ἱερᾶς Σκήτης Κανσοκαλυβίων καὶ τῶν καλυβῶν αὐτῆς* (Paris, 1930), p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> On similar ‘libri di lusso’, and the suspicion with which they were already regarded by Ioannes Chrysostomos and Saint Jerome: Guglielmo Cavallo, ‘Libri in Scena’, in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies. London 21–26 August 2006*.

the epigram, the splendour of material things is defended, and its possible condemnation is refuted as short-sighted. In this respect it is quite similar to other dedicatory epigrams praising the material value of a book.<sup>68</sup>

In another article of the present collection, Marc Lauxtermann argues that Mark the Monk was not the scribe, but the owner of this *de luxe* pocket book, and the author of this highbrow epigram.<sup>69</sup> In Lauxtermann's reading, it was Mark's private travel pocket book, in which case he would himself have been the real reader not only of the psalms but also of his own apologetic epigram. This was, then, probably meant as an elaborate poetic-rhetorical 'exercise', functioning as a self-reminder on how to regard this splendid manuscript.

## Concluding Remarks

The epigrams we have analysed in this article are quite different in many ways: their 'category' (laudatory, dedicatory, recommendatory, scribal), their real or implied author (scribe, donor, corrector), their place in the manuscript (beginning versus end), their length (between 4 and 30 verses). All of them, however, clearly try to establish a relationship with the implied reader in order to achieve various communicative goals: morally adequate behaviour, spiritual aid or recognition, knowledge of the author's name, the proper admiration for the book, and so on. The distance created towards the reader varies from close, almost personal alliance to the latter's inclusion in hypothetical or collective abstractions, with addresses ranging from *ψυχῇ γλυκεῖα* and *φίλε* to *ἅπαντες* and *βλέπων τις*.

In some cases we noticed a lack of congruity between the hypothetical reader as he emerges from the text and the 'real reader', based on the (limited) historical information we have. In the epigram *Ἐυαγγελιστῶν τοὺς θεοπνεύστους λόγους*, for example, the hypothetical reader is listening to the text, whereas it seems unlikely that a monastic community would listen to a dedicatory epigram being read aloud. In another epigram, *Ἰσως βλέπων τις τήνδε τὴν σοφὴν βιβλον*, the fictive or inscribed reader is an anonymous person either criticizing or interpreting correctly the beautiful manuscript, while the real reader might be just the writer and owner himself.

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*Volume 1, Plenary Papers* (London, 2006), pp. 345–364, pp. 346–349. See also Lowden, 'Luxury and liturgy', pp. 263–280.

<sup>68</sup> A similar perspective can be found in the epigram *Ἐνταῦθα νῦν σκόπησον ὀρθῶς ὁ βλέπων* (Vassiss, p. 234). This epigram appears on fol. X<sup>r</sup> of *Vatic. gr.* 1613, the famous Menologium of Basil II (late tenth, early eleventh century). It is edited by Enrica Follieri, *Codices graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae selecti temporum locorumque ordine digesti, commentarii et transcriptionibus instructi* (Vatican City, 1969), p. 34. The epigram might have accompanied a now lost miniature of Basil, and tells the spectator whom he is looking at. Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, 'The illuminators of the menologium of Basil II', *DOP*, 16 (1962): pp. 243–276.

<sup>69</sup> This is consistent with the practice mentioned by Rapp, 'Holy texts', pp. 204–205.

All in all, these epigrams present ideal or standard situations, to a large extent determined by the genre of the book epigram, a genre which deserves more attention than it has generally received.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> We would like to thank Floris Bernard wholeheartedly for his many relevant and constructive remarks on earlier versions of this article. Marc De Groote and Eirini Afentoulidou also gave us helpful advice on particular questions.

## Chapter 6

# Historical Figures Appearing in Epigrams on Objects

Anneliese Paul

When we discuss historical figures appearing in epigrams on objects, we must take into consideration that, while most of them are to be found evenly distributed over other centuries, they are to be found in particular density in the eleventh century. This cannot be mere coincidence.

In this period, the majority of epigrams to be found on objects appear in manuscripts, on stone, and on ecclesiastical objects. Only a few are to be found on profane objects and icons, only one on a fresco, and one on a mosaic that is no longer preserved.<sup>1</sup> Many of the objects with epigrams that concern us here originate from Constantinople, even if they are now preserved elsewhere. The epigrams I have selected for this study are now in Venice, Rome, Brescia, Paris, Moscow, Sinai, Tbilisi, Carpignano Salentino near Otranto, and in Vienna.

I regard as historical figures anyone whose name appears also in other sources, or whose importance is such that it could appear there. This includes members of the imperial family, from Basileios II (**8**)<sup>2</sup> to Nikephoros Botaneiates (**3, 4, 5, 6**), as well as women of the imperial family (Maria **9, 10**, Eudokia **7**, Zoe and Theodora **13**), high-ranking officials (**15, 16**), and senior ecclesiastical figures (**17**). In every epigram concerning Byzantine emperors, the text refers directly to the pictorial representation.

Of the forty or so epigrams from the eleventh century of relevance to our subject (the greatest number for any one century), only a small selection can be presented within the scope of this article. Some epigrams refer to historical figures without giving names, instead only offering anonymous allusions (**1, 2**), others are only identifiable on the basis of an additional inscription on the miniature or reliquary (**3, 4, 5, 6**: Nikephoros Botaneiates; **8**: Basileios II; **7**: Konstantinos X and Eudokia). Others give a name, but without it being possible to identify on the basis of the text which instance of this name is intended (**9**: Michael; **10**: Maria; **11, 12**: Konstantinos). Only in a few cases is the reference to a very specific person unambiguous because a cognomen is mentioned (**13**: Μονομάχος). In epigrams dealing with high-ranking figures outside the imperial family (**15, 16, 17**), the name is always mentioned. The named person evidently wanted

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<sup>1</sup> Andreas Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, Band 1: *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken* (Vienna, 2008), p. 405, nr. M17.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers in bold refer to the numbering of the epigrams as used in this article.

to ensure that they were recognized as donor, and for the reader this information was important.

For historians the yield is disappointing, because there is no information about historical events, nor anything that could contribute to an interpretation of such events. There is nothing to be heard of military successes (at least not in detail, only very general information: 8: ἐχθρούς τοὺς ποσὶ προσκειμένους), nor of great political achievements: only titles relating to civil<sup>3</sup> or ecclesiastical<sup>4</sup> positions. In the case of the emperor, only the attribution of virtues that befit a στεφηφόρος,<sup>5</sup> are highlighted. The emphasis is on the Christian way of life. It is significant that in both imperial names and official titles, the indication πιστός appears next to κραταῖος (8),<sup>6</sup> a sign that faith and power are inextricably linked in Byzantium.

Nearly all epigrams examined for our study have a religious connection. There is no evidence in the case of objects of this period pointing to famous authors as composers of epigrams: that is, the epigrams remain anonymous. The place of narrator in the epigrams is taken by, variously the painter or scribe (5), the object itself (7), high-ranking officials (15, 16), Christ (9) and the archangel Michael (6). Addressees are Christ (2, 13), the Cross (10), the Apostles (11), the emperor (3, 4, 5, 6), and a passing observer (16, 17). It is typical of these epigrams that they frequently represent a dialogue.

The themes covered in the epigrams are presentation of foundations, ἐκφράσεις of objects and figures depicted, prayers (particularly for protection of the emperor and his family), requests addressed to the emperor, lamentation of a death, and the dedication of a funerary monument.

In the small selection which follows I present five ways in which historical figures are presented in epigrams.

<sup>3</sup> δεσπότης (2, 11, 12) / πιστὸς κραταῖος δεσπότης (8) / κράτιστος δεσπότης (13) / ἄναξ (5, 6) / Ῥώμης ἄναξ (4) / στεφηφόρος (6) / σκηπτουχία (3) / βασιλῆς (4, 10) / ὕπατος (15) / σπαθάριος (16) οἰκῶν ἐν Καρπινιάνα.

<sup>4</sup> ποιμενάρχης, σύγκελλος (17).

<sup>5</sup> ταῖς ἀρεταῖς κατεστεμμένος (5).

<sup>6</sup> A significant example is a poem by Ioannes Mauropous addressed to Konstantinos IX Monomachos, beginning with the words Πιστὸς βασιλεύς, εὐσεβὴς αὐτοκράτωρ (L 71.1).



## I

The first possible type of presentation in epigrams is that of general anonymous allusion. An example of this is offered by ms. *Barberinianus Gr.* 372 of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (the so-called *Barberini* psalter). On fol. 4<sup>v</sup> there is a dedicatory poem, and the miniature on fol. 5<sup>r</sup> is framed by the following epigram:<sup>7</sup>

## 1

Οὗς ἡ τριφεγγής<sup>8</sup> ἔνθεος μοναρχία,  
πολλοῖς φυλάξει καὶ γαληνίοις χρόνοις,  
εἰρηνικῇ τε καὶ σοφῇ καταστάσει  
**διεξάγειν τὰ σκήπτρα τῆς ἐξουσίας.**<sup>9</sup>

*May the triple-enlightening divine monarchy  
Guard them through many tranquil years,  
So that they may in peaceful and wise order  
Wield the sceptre of authority.*

The decorative writing used for the epigram is striking.<sup>10</sup> The epigram is the frame, but at the same time also part of the image. The inscription runs around the miniature (the order of the lines – top, left, right, bottom – is indicated by α, β, γ, δ). The first word οὗς could indicate that the epigram is either the continuation of a preceding text (perhaps on a page now lost),<sup>11</sup> in which the names referred to by οὗς appeared, or that

<sup>7</sup> The suggestion put forward by Anna Marava-Chatzinikolaou, that the two epigrams on fols. 4<sup>v</sup> and 5<sup>r</sup> are the works of Michael Psellos, who commissioned the book (*Τριφεγγής ἔνθεος μοναρχία*, *DChAE*, IV/21 (2000): p. 223), remains mere conjecture.

<sup>8</sup> This use of *τριφεγγής* is also to be found in a poem by Theodoros Prodromos, a prayer to the Trinity: Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte*, ed. W. Hörandner (Vienna, 1974), p. 59, p. 299: τῷ τριφεγγεῖ καὶ μοναγεῖ σου φάει. In my opinion, the first verse does not, as Marava-Chatzinikolaou, *Τριφεγγής*, p. 221 proposes, refer to an earthly monarchy. Concerning the interpretation of a divine trinity, see Titos Papamastorakis, 'Orb of the Earth: Images of Imperial Universality', in E. Chrysos (ed.), *Τὸ Βυζάντιο ὡς οἰκουμένη* (Athens, 2005), p. 89: 'the triple enlightening Holy Kingdom (i.e. the Holy Trinity)'.

<sup>9</sup> Joannis Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), p. 27 (with English translation), fig. 7; Anthony Cutler and John W. Nesbitt, *L'arte bizantina e il suo pubblico* (Turin, 1986), p. 268, colour fig.; Jeffrey Anderson, Paul Canart and Christopher Walter, *The Barberini Psalter. Codex Vaticanus Barberinianus Graecus 372. Introduction and Commentary* (Zürich/New York, 1989), p. 56; Christopher Walter, *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery* (Aldershot, 1993), vol. 4, pp. 196–197, plate 14; Marava – Chatzinikolaou, *Τριφεγγής*, p. 223, fig. 2 on p. 224; Papamastorakis, 'Orb of the Earth', p. 100, fig. 13; cf. Ioannis Vassis, *Initia Carminum Byzantinorum* (Berlin, 2005), p. 575. All translations of texts are mine.

<sup>10</sup> Compare also 13.

<sup>11</sup> Walter, *Prayer and Power*, vol. 4, pp. 196–197.

it is the continuation of the poem on fol. 4<sup>v</sup>.<sup>12</sup> However, in my opinion, one glance at the miniature framed by the epigram is enough to make the connection between οὗς and the persons depicted. Here, the wish is being expressed that the divine Trinity may protect the earthly trinity.

The miniature on fol. 5<sup>r</sup> shows an emperor holding in his right hand the *labarum* and in his left hand the ἀνέξικακία. The young co-emperor in the center also holds in his right hand the *labarum*, and in his left hand a book, probably the Psalter intended for him. An angel receives from Christ the crown<sup>13</sup> for the emperor. This scene symbolizes the transmission of imperial power through Christ. The anonymity of the scene, could, as Grabar thought,<sup>14</sup> be intentional, symbolizing coronation instead of representing a specific one. If an attempt is to be made to connect it with specific individuals,<sup>15</sup> a συμβασιλεία must come to mind. At this point, opinions diverge, and consequently the dating varies (to the eleventh, but also to the twelfth century).<sup>16</sup> For the eleventh century there are several possibilities. According to Spatharakis, the image is of Konstantinos X Doukas (1059–1067), his wife Eudokia Makrembolitissa, and their son Michael (later Michael VII Doukas) or Konstantinos, whose coronation as co-emperor<sup>17</sup> suggests a date of 1060. According to Walter<sup>18</sup> and others, it represents Alexios I Komnenos, Eirene, and their son Ioannes, crowned in 1092. According to Marava-Chatzinikolaou, it depicts the coronation of Romanos IV Diogenes in 1067.<sup>19</sup> His wife Eudokia Makrembolitissa and her son Michael (from her first marriage with Konstantinos X Doukas), whose crowns are merely touched by the angels, are already crowned. This does not seem improbable to me, because in the miniature clearly only the emperor is actually being crowned. This is still valid even if the original image looked different, with regard to the crowns of the emperor and young co-emperor, since semi-spherical crowns do not appear before 1100.<sup>20</sup> Here, they are the product of a later repainting from the fourteenth century,

<sup>12</sup> Marava-Chatzinikolaou, “Τριφεγγής,” p. 222 thinks that this preceding text is the dedicatory epigram on fol. 4<sup>v</sup>, in which, however, no names are mentioned.

<sup>13</sup> The shape of the crowns worn by the emperor and co-emperor probably are the result of a change made during the re-use of the psalter for another ruler: Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> André Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Strasbourg, 1936, repr. London, 1971), p. 119: anonymity points to the mystical origin of imperial power.

<sup>15</sup> For attempts at identification, see Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pp. 28–34.

<sup>16</sup> According to Klaus Wessel, *Die Kultur von Byzanz* (Frankfurt am Main, 1970), p. 350, it depicts Manuel I (1143–1180), Maria and Alexios II, leading to a twelfth-century dating.

<sup>17</sup> According to Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X. – XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1934, repr. 1979), vol. 2, p. 15, the actual coronation date is not decisive in dating representations of imperial coronation by Christ. What is being represented is the legitimacy of the ruler.

<sup>18</sup> Walter, *Prayer and Power*, vol. 4, p. 197.

<sup>19</sup> The transfer of power is described by Psellos in his Χρονογραφία: Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, ed. S. Impellizzeri, Michele Psello, *Imperatori di Bisanzio (Cronografia)* (2 vols, Milan, 3rd ed., 1997), book VIIb, §6; vol. 2, p. 326.

<sup>20</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 263.

such that the hands of the angels behind the edges of the crowns nearly disappear. The number of angels emphasizes the respect due to the earthly trinity of rulers.

Another example of an anonymous imperial representation is to be found in ms. Paris. gr. 74:

2

Σὺ τὸ στέφος δέδωκας ἐν γῇ, παντάναξ,  
τῷ κοσμοτερπεῖ βασιλεῖ καὶ δεσπότῃ·  
σὺ τοῦτον ὠράισας ἀρετῶν κύκλῳ  
καὶ πᾶσιν αὐτὸν τριπόθητον εἰργάσω·  
σὺ λοιπὸν αὐτῷ χάρισαι καὶ τὸ κράτος  
μόνιμον ὡς μάλιστα τῆς σκηπτουχίας  
καὶ παγγενῇ φύλαττε σῶ, σῶτερ, σθένει.<sup>21</sup>

5

*You, Universal Lord, have given the earthly crown  
To the emperor and ruler, who gladdens the world;  
You have adorned him with the circle of virtues  
And have made him thrice loved by all.  
Accordingly, grant him also power  
Most steadfast to command,  
And protect him and his entire family, Saviour, by your power.*

Unfortunately, we are not informed of the identity of this emperor who gladdens the world. Perhaps there was an image of the emperor and his family at the beginning of the codex, but the pages are missing.<sup>22</sup> According to the description, however, he must have been an exceptional figure, even if a great many Byzantine emperors would have laid claim to such praise. Τὸ στέφος ἐν γῇ refers to power on earth, and κοσμοτερπῆς βασιλεὺς and δεσπότης are in opposition to παντάναξ: here, power over the world; there, power over the universe. Christ as Universal Lord (παντάναξ), who has the power and can also bestow it, crowns the earthly ruler (often referred to as ἄναξ),<sup>23</sup> who, distinguished by God by his virtues and popularity, is nevertheless dependent upon God's help for his personal welfare and that of his family, as well as for the continuation of his rule.

<sup>21</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 67; cf. Vassis, p. 702.

<sup>22</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 67.

<sup>23</sup> For example ἄναξ 5, 6; Πώμης ἄναξ 4; ὑψους ἀνάκτων 3.

## II

When we come to the second type of presentation, mention of a name or a more specific identification in the epigram is made unnecessary by an additional inscription in the miniature or the reliquary, identifying the poem more precisely.

At the beginning of the Parisian codex ms. *Coislin* 79, a copy of 33 homilies of Ioannes Chrysostomos, there are four valuable full-page introductory miniatures. As Spatharakis has shown convincingly, the manuscript was first intended to be dedicated to Michael VII (1071–1078), but after his death it was given to Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078–1081) instead.<sup>24</sup> This explains some adjustments in the miniatures.

On fol. 1(2 bis)<sup>r</sup>, we read the following poem, preceded by the caption ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΣ ΕΝ ΧΩ ΤΩ ΘΩ ΠΙCΤΟC<sup>25</sup> ΒΑCΙΑΕΥC ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ Ο ΒΟΤΑΝΕΙΑΤΗC:

## 3

“Υψους ἀνάκτων εὐκλεῆς σκηπτουχία  
ταῖς ἡδοναῖς θέλχθητι ταῖς ἐκ τῶν λόγων  
καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τέρφθητι καὶ χαίρων κρότει  
σοῖς οἰκέταις βράβευε χεῖρα πλουσίαν.”<sup>26</sup>

*Glorious sceptre-bearer at the head of rulers,  
Be charmed by the delights of these words  
Rejoice in your soul, applaud gladly  
And reward your servants with a generous hand.*

It is not easy to identify the speaker here, but from σοῖς οἰκέταις we can perhaps infer, also on the basis of epigrams 5 and 6, that they were the scribe and the artist, who produced the manuscript.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pp. 113–114.

<sup>25</sup> πιστός should not be connected with ἐν Χριστῷ τῷ θεῷ, as Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Illuminated Greek Manuscripts I. From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, 1990), p. 66 apparently assume, given their insertion of punctuation after πιστός in an example dealing with Konstantinos Monomachos. In Klaus Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels from the 5th to the 13th Century* (Recklinghausen, 1967), p. 112, the translation ‘believing in Christ’ also appears, in the case of an example mentioning Michael Doukas.

<sup>26</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 108 (with English translation), fig. 69; Wessel, *Kultur von Byzanz*, p. 388, fig. 222; Lyn Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 256; Carmen-Laura Dumitrescu, ‘Remarques en marge du Coislin 79: Les trois eunuques et le problème du donateur’, *Byz*, 57 (1987): pp. 32–45, fig. 1; Jeffrey C. Anderson, ‘Manuscripts’, in H. Evans and W. Wixom (eds), *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843–1261* (New York, 1997), p. 82, colour fig.; cf. Vassis, p. 832.

<sup>27</sup> Dumitrescu, ‘Remarques’, p. 43.

In the epigram, the emperor is presented as a glorious sceptre-bearer (εὐκλεῆς σκηπτουχία). Notable is the use of the abstract expression (comparable with ‘Your Highness’, ‘Your Majesty’, or in German ‘Eure Hoheit’, ‘Eure Majestät’) instead of σκηπτούχος. He stands at the head of rulers (ὑψους ἀνάκτων) and may rejoice in the λόγοι (presumably the homilies of Chrysostomos), express his happiness and be generous towards his servants.

The inscription is above the miniature, which shows the emperor on a lyre-shaped throne. Next to him stands a monk, who points with a staff to an open book (with the homilies of Chrysostomos) on a lectern. Captions give the names of the monk Sabas and the emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates, so the reader knows who is being addressed in the epigram.

In the second example on fol.1 (2 bis)<sup>v</sup> of the same manuscript, the captions above the heads tell us more about the imperial couple: Nikephoros (III) Botaneiates and Maria, both with official titles: ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΣ ΕΝ ΧΩ ΤΩ ΘΩ ΠΙCΤΟC ΒΑCΙΑΕΥC ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ Ο ΒΟΤΑΝΕΙΑΤΗC and ΜΑΡΙΑ ΕΝ ΧΩ ΤΩ ΘΩ ΠΙCΤΗ ΒΑCΙΑΙCΑ ΚΑΙ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙCΑ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ.

Christ can be seen in bust, crowning the imperial couple (originally Michael VII Doukas [1071–1078], whose name was later changed to that of Nikephoros Botaneiates<sup>28</sup> and his wife Maria).<sup>29</sup> It may be, as Spatharakis thinks,<sup>30</sup> that this gesture does not represent the act of crowning, but of blessing, of divine support for their rule. This is also referred to in the epigram. In the poem, the emperor is presented in general terms as ‘ruler of Rome’ (Ρώμης ἀναξ), with his most noble wife, with no mention of names:

## 4

Σκέποι σε Χριστὸς εὐλογῶν, **Ρώμης ἀναξ**,  
σὺν βασιλίδι τῇ πανευγενεστάτῃ.<sup>31</sup>

*May the blessing Christ protect you, ruler of Rome,  
Together with the most noble empress.*

<sup>28</sup> Nikolaos Gioles, ‘Byzantine Imperial Insignia’, in M. Evangelatou, H. Papastavrou et al. (eds), *Byzantium: An Oecumenical Empire* (Athens, 2002), p. 68 with reference to fig. 18.

<sup>29</sup> Her beauty and gentle character is described by Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, ed. D.R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis (Berlin/New York, 2001), book 3, ch. 2, §4, p. 110: τὸ τῆς βασιλίδος κάλλος καὶ ἡ ἐπιλάμπουσα αὐτῇ χάρις καὶ τῶν ἡθῶν ἐπαγωγόν τε καὶ εὐχαρί ... ἀγάλμα ἐμψυχον καὶ ἀνθρώποις φιλοκάλοις ἐράσμιον.

<sup>30</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 118.

<sup>31</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 108 (with English translation), fig. 70; Grabar, *L'empereur*, p. 118; Wessel, *Kultur von Byzanz*, p. 388, fig. 222; Dumitrescu, ‘Remarques’, fig. 2; Henry Maguire, ‘Images of the Court’, in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, p. 182, colour fig.; Mary B. Cunningham, *Faith in the Byzantine World* (Oxford, 2002), p. 51, fig. 19; cf. Vassis, p. 674.

Πανευγενεστάτη shows how a superlative can be reinforced by adding παν (which itself has a superlative function, as for example in παναγία, πανάχραντος).

In the miniature on fol. 2<sup>r</sup> of the same codex, the emperor is sitting on a throne. He is crowned by virtues and surrounded by loyal followers. These are the ἄνδρες λογάδες (v. 4), the chosen men: officials, whose high rank is made clear in the epigram by the abstract expression ἀκρότης and in the image by their elevated position. They stand next to the emperor and are identified in the inscriptions by their official function<sup>32</sup> but not by name. Nikephoros is made known by the inscription above his head. The epigram mentions no name, but in vv. 1–4, there is an ἐκφρασις of the image:

## 5

᾿Ως φωσφόρον φέρει σε λάμποντα θρόνος  
ταῖς ἀρεταῖς μάλιστα κατεστεμμένον·  
παρίσταται σοι πιστοτάτων ἀκρότης,  
ἄνδρες λογάδες εὐγενεῖς ψυχὴν πλέον.  
πλὴν τῷ γράφοντι συμπαθὲς ἔλθοις, ἄναξ·  
πίστιν φέρει γὰρ εἰς τὸ σὸν πλείστην κράτος.<sup>33</sup>

5

*The throne bears you, shining like the morning star,  
Crowned abundantly with virtues;  
Next to you stand the highest of your most faithful servants,  
Chosen men, even more noble in their soul.  
May you have even more concern for the writer (painter),<sup>34</sup> Lord;  
For he brings the greatest faithfulness to your rule.*

<sup>32</sup> Maria G. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images. Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th–15th Centuries)* (Leiden/Boston, 2003), p. 228, note 30 and Appendix 3, nr. 17 with a detailed description of their garments.

<sup>33</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pp. 110–111 (with English translation), fig. 71; Grabar, *L'empereur*, p. 119; Wessel, *Kultur von Byzanz*, p. 354, fig. 205; Dumitrescu, 'Remarques', fig. 3; Marie-Claude Bianchini, *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises* (Paris, 1992), p. 360, colour fig. 271; Anthony Cutler and Jean-Michel Spieser, *Das mittelalterliche Byzanz 725–1204* (Munich, 1996), colour fig. 268; Henry Maguire, *Image and Imagination: the Byzantine Epigram as Evidence for Viewer Response* (Toronto, 1996), p. 248, fig. XI 3; Henry Maguire, 'The Heavenly Court', in Henry Maguire (ed.), *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204* (Washington, D.C., 1997), pp. 247–258, fig. 3; Robert G. Ousterhout, 'Secular Architecture', in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, p. 207, nr. 143 (with English translation), p. 208; Parani, *Reconstructing*, p. 16 and p. 228, note 30, fig. 6; cf. Vassil, p. 909.

<sup>34</sup> The person who commissioned the work, and employed the author or painter, may also be intended here.

The emperor is described using the customary image of shining light-bearer,<sup>35</sup> comparable to a second sun or the morning star<sup>36</sup> (compare φαεινὴν τριάδα **13**), symbolically crowned with virtues. This expression is emphasized in the miniature by the pictorial representation of the personified virtues Ἀλήθεια and Δικαιοσύνη,<sup>37</sup> standing behind the throne. The crown is therefore not only symbol of power, but also of the moral superiority of the emperor.<sup>38</sup> His light shines upon his subjects. He is surrounded by chosen men, who look up to him. The relationship between the emperor and his subjects reminds us of the relationship between God and the emperor. Michael Psellos expresses this clearly with regard to the emperor Konstantinos IX Monomachos.<sup>39</sup> Although the emperor, with his noble retinue, belongs to another world, the writer or painter, because of his loyalty, expects the emperor to act sympathetically towards him.

On fol. 2<sup>v</sup> of the same manuscript, there is a miniature showing the emperor standing on a high, decorated *suppedion* (podium), flanked by Ioannes Chrysostomos, who is handing him the volume of homilies, and the archangel Michael.<sup>40</sup> To the right of the emperor's feet a small figure is kneeling (perhaps the painter). In the epigram the

<sup>35</sup> This description is used for example by Mauroπους for the emperor Konstantinos IX Monomachos: L 55.35: τὸν φαεινὸν ἥλιον καὶ φωσφόρον. Psellos addresses Michael IV (1034–1041) with: κραταίε φωσφόρε στεφηφόρε (W 16.1), and Isaak Komnenos (1057–1059) with: τοῦ κράτους ὁ φωσφόρος (W 19.2) and φωσφόρος (W 19.23), φεγγολαμπεῖς (W 19.24) λαμπτήρ ἀγνείας, εὐσεβείας φωσφόρος (W 19.41), σὺ λαμπρῷ κράτει (W 19.16).

<sup>36</sup> This comparison is already to found in the case of Roman emperors, for example for Domitian: Statius, *Silvae* 4, 4: *clarius ipse nitens et primo maior Eoo*. Liudprand von Cremona informs us that when the emperor entered the Hippodrome, the cry went up: 'Ecce venit stella matutina': Liudprand of Cremona, *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana*, ed. B. Scott (Bristol, 1993), p. 4, ch. 10.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. the personification of Ταπεινώσις and Ἀλήθεια on the crown of Monomachos in **13**, n. 88.

<sup>38</sup> Thus Psellos, in his enkomia for Monomachos, speaks of his angelic way of life in the palace: Michael Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*, ed. G.T. Dennis (Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1994), or. 8, l. 51–54: ἀγγελικὴν διαίταν, ἣν ἐν βασιλείοις ὁ βασιλεὺς ... ἡσπάζου καὶ μετήρχου; see Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 251 and p. 258.

<sup>39</sup> Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*, or. 4, l. 538–9: 'ὦν', ὅπερ ἐκεῖνός ἐστι πρὸς σέ, τοῦτο σὺ πρὸς ὑμᾶς γίνῃ; see also Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 247, n. 2. The emperor, for the Byzantines, was close to God. Thus Mauroπους describes the emperor Michael IV as θεοῦ θεῖος τύπος, πλάστης νέος and δημιουργός: L 54.39 and 42–43; Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 248.

<sup>40</sup> A kind of imperial Δέσις in which the emperor assumes the role of God, see Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 249; Dumitrescu, 'Remarques', p. 41.



archangel Michael declares that he will protect the emperor,<sup>41</sup> as crown-bearer,<sup>42</sup> and that he, together with Chrysostomos, act as petitioners on behalf of the painter:

6

Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι σὸς φύλαξ, **στεφηφόρε**,  
ὡς ἔγν(ων) αὐτὸς πραγμάτων τὰς ἐκβάσεις·  
ὁ δ' αὖ γε ῥήσεις καὶ χρυσοῦν φέρων στόμα,  
ὁ συγγραφεὺς, ἔστηκεν εἰς δυσωπίαν  
αἰτῶν σὺν ἡμῖν γραφέως τοῦ σοῦ χάριν,  
ὃν εὐμενῶς βλέποις τε καὶ τρέφοις, **ἄναξ**.<sup>43</sup>

5

*I am your protector, crown-bearer,  
As I have myself known the outcome of events.  
And this man, who possesses words and a mouth of gold,  
The author, stands here for an entreaty,  
Beseeching with me your mercy for your painter,<sup>44</sup>  
Whom (may you) regard with a benevolent eye, and support, Lord!*

Here the painter has both the angel and the saint entreat on his behalf and does not entreat the emperor himself, as in the previous example (5). With ἐγὼ μὲν and ὁ δ' Michael and Ioannes Chrysostomos are juxtaposed to each other. Στεφηφόρε at the end of the first verse corresponds to ἄναξ at the end of the last verse: the emperor is the main figure here.

The octagonal gilded silver reliquary of Saint Demetrius, which is now to be found in the Kremlin, is dated to the reign of Konstantinos X. It is shaped in the form of

<sup>41</sup> He is also described as the archangel Michael in, among others, Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 249. This identification can also be drawn from the inscription to the miniature – not Gabriel, as erroneously in: Cutler and Nesbitt, *L'arte bizantina*, p. 225, and André Grabar, *Byzanz. Die byzantinische Kunst des Mittelalters (vom 8. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert)* (Baden-Baden, 1964), p. 57 colour fig. and p. 162. It is logical that he would be the protector of his namesake Michael VII: Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 118.

<sup>42</sup> This address was customary, see for example L 54.2: δέσποτα στεφηφόρε. See also θεόστεπτε: Ioannes Mauropous, *Epistulae*, ed. A. Karpozelos, *The letters of Ioannes Mauropous, metropolitan of Euchaita* (Thessaloniki, 1990), p. 103, epist. 26, l. 1: θεοδόξαστε καὶ θεόστεπτε; W 35.1: δέσποτα στεφηφόρε; W 16.1: κραταῖε φωσφόρε στεφηφόρε; Nikolaos Kallikles, ed. R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi, Testo critico, introduzione e traduzione, commentario e lessico* (Naples, 1980), p. 113, nr. 31, v. 17: βασιλεῦ στεφηφόρε.

<sup>43</sup> Jean Lassus, *Frühchristliche und byzantinische Welt: Architektur, Plastik, Mosaiken, Fresken, Elfenbeinkunst, Metallarbeiten* (Gütersloh, 1968), p. 113, colour fig. 146; Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 112 (with English translation), fig. 72; Dumitrescu, 'Remarques', p. 41, fig. 4; Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', fig. 4; Cutler and Nesbitt, *L'arte bizantina*, p. 225, colour fig.; Bianchini, *Byzance. L'art byzantin*, p. 361, colour fig. 271; Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, 'Painter's Portraits in Byzantine Art', *DChAE*, IV/17 (1993–1994): p. 133, fig. 5; Parani, *Reconstructing*, fig. 6; cf. Vassis, p. 167.

<sup>44</sup> Painter or author; see Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 249.



a ciborium<sup>45</sup> on which the images are separated by pillars. Above these one can see interrupted arches with stylized acanthus leaves. In the arches are oil lamps on a high stand, and above them an octagonal cone-shaped roof, which may once have supported a cross. The four narrow fields are decorated with vine and palm motifs. One of the four larger fields acts as a door, representing on its two leaves two military saints, identified by inscriptions as Saint Nestor and Saint Lupos. In the opposite field one can see the imperial couple, crowned by Christ (represented by a bust in a celestial segment). The couple is identified by an inscription as Konstantinos (X) Doukas (1059–1067) and his wife Eudokia (Makrembolitissa).<sup>46</sup> It is striking that both hold a *globus* as symbol of their worldwide power.<sup>47</sup> This can be explained by the fact that Konstantinos, because of his illness, entrusted his political duties to his wife.<sup>48</sup> The official title reserved for her is *μεγάλη βασιλίσσα Ρωμένων*.

The two remaining broad fields are each decoratively filled with three verses of the following epigram.<sup>49</sup> The poet enlivens his presentation by allowing the object to speak.

7

Σαφὴς πέφυκα τοῦ κιβωρίου τύπος  
τοῦ λογχονύκτου μάρτυρος Δημητρίου.  
'Ἐχω δὲ Χριστὸν ἐκτὸς ἐστηλωμένον  
στέφοντα χερσὶ **τὴν καλὴν ξυνωρίδα**.  
'Ο δ' αὖ με τεύξας Ἰωάννης ἐκ γένους  
Αὐτρωειανῶν τὴν τύχην μυστογράφος.<sup>50</sup>

5

<sup>45</sup> Klaus Wessel in *RbK*, s.v. Ciborium / κιβώριον (etymology unknown): construction of columns or pillars, bearing a cupola; symbol of Heaven.

<sup>46</sup> The letters in brackets do not appear in the text of the inscription.

<sup>47</sup> About this attribute, see Gioles, 'Imperial Insignia', p. 74; Thomas F. Mathews, 'Religious Organization and Church Architecture', in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, p. 78, nr.36.

<sup>48</sup> Psellos, *Chronographia*, book VIIa, §27, vol. 2, p. 316: ... τῷ θανάτῳ προσήγγισεν· κἀνταῦθα ἐπὶ τῇ γυναικὶ Εὐδοκίᾳ πάντα πεποιήται, σωφρονεστάτῃ τε τῶν καθ' ἑαυτὴν νομιζομένη and VIIb, §1, vol. 2, p. 320: Ἡ βασιλὶς Εὐδοκία, κατὰ τὰς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς καὶ βασιλείας διατάξεις τῶν ὧλων ἐγκρατὴς γενομένη ...

<sup>49</sup> These fields, necessary for the epigram, resulted in the octagonal form, instead of the hexagonal form of the original ciborium in Thessaloniki.

<sup>50</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, vol. 2, p. 15, fig. 4; Nausika Theotoka, 'Περὶ τῶν κιβωρίων τῶν ναῶν τοῦ Ἀγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης καὶ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως', *Μακεδονικά*, 2 (1941–1952): pp. 408–409, figs. 3 and 4; André Grabar, 'Quelques reliquaires de Saint Démétrios et le Martyrium du Saint à Salonique', *DOP*, 5 (1950): pp. 19–20, figs. 21 and 22; Alice Bank, *L'art byzantin dans les musées de l'Union Soviétique* (Saint Petersburg, 1977, repr. 1985), colour figs. 203 and 204; Mathews, 'Religious Organization', pp. 77–78, nr. 36, fig. 36; Andreas Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, Band II. *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst* (Vienna, 2010), nr. Me 99; cf. Vassil, p. 667.

*I am the truthful image of the ciborium  
of the martyr Demetrios, pierced by a spear.  
I have Christ, who is represented outside  
crowning with his hands the beautiful couple.  
He, who made me (had me made) is Ioannes  
from the family of Autoreianoi, mystographer by fortune.*

In verse 1 to 4, the object gives information about its function. In a fragmentary *ekphrasis* of its images, it only elaborates on the representation of Christ crowning the imperial couple. In vv. 5 to 6 it speaks of its founder, Ioannes Autoreianos, and his function as a *μυστογράφος* ('secret secretary').<sup>51</sup>

The reliquary could have been a gift from Ioannes Autoreianos to the imperial couple,<sup>52</sup> especially to the ailing emperor, in the hope that he might be healed by it. It compliments the imperial couple, but at the same time places emphasis upon the patron who commissioned it, mentioning both his family connections and his official function.

The codex *Marc. gr. Z 17* of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice contains the psalter of Basileios, the oldest Psalter with an imperial portrait<sup>53</sup> (1004<sup>54</sup> or 1019).<sup>55</sup> The miniature on fol. 3<sup>r</sup> shows Basileios (976–1025) on a *scabellum*, standing in full military dress. Christ holds out a crown prepared for the emperor, while an angel (Gabriel) places it on Basileios's head, – a characteristic example of symbolic coronation.<sup>56</sup> The other angel (Michael) hands Basileios a spear, thereby bestowing victory upon him. The inscription to his right and left (Βασίλειος ἐν Χριστῷ πιστός<sup>57</sup> βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων ὁ νέος) permits unambiguous identification. The figures at his feet are the enemies. To his right and left side are busts of saintly warriors. In this way Basileios is characterized as ἀθλητὴς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

The epigram on fol. 2<sup>v</sup> names Basileios, without a more precise identification. The poem is a good example of an ἐκφρασις, for it describes the miniature:

## 8

Τὸ θαῦμα καινὸν ὦδε τῶν ὀρωμένων·  
Χριστὸς προτείνει δεξιᾷ ζωηφόρῳ  
ἐξ οὐρανοῦ τὸ στέμμα, σύμβολον κράτους,  
**πιστῷ κραταιῷ δεσπότη Βασιλείῳ.**  
κάτωθεν οἱ πρῶτιστοι τῶν ἀσωμάτων,  
ὁ μὲν λαβὼν ἤνεγκε καὶ χαίρων στέφει,

5

<sup>51</sup> LBG, s.v. *μυστογράφος*.

<sup>52</sup> Mathews, 'Religious Organization', p. 78.

<sup>53</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 20.

<sup>54</sup> Gioles, 'Imperial Insignia', p. 64, n. 15.

<sup>55</sup> Walter, *Prayer and Power*, p. 193.

<sup>56</sup> Grabar, *L'empereur*, p. 113: symbolic coronation by Christ.

<sup>57</sup> In Walter, *Prayer and Power*, p. 193 appears the translation, in my opinion incorrect: 'Basil II, faithful in Christ, emperor of the Romans'. Compare n. 25.

ὁ δὲ προσάπτων τῷ κράτει καὶ τὰς νίκας,  
 ῥομφαίαν, ὄπλον ἐκφοβοῦν ἐναντίους,  
 φέρων δίδωσι χειρὶ τῇ τοῦ δεσπότητος.  
 οἱ μάρτυρες δὲ συμμαχοῦσιν ὡς φίλῳ,  
 ῥίπτοντες ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ποσὶ προ[σ?]κειμένους.<sup>58</sup>

10

*New is the wonder of the things here seen.  
 From Heaven Christ holds out in his life-bringing right hand  
 the crown, symbol of power,  
 to the faithful, strong ruler Basileios.  
 Below him [are] the first of the incorporeal,  
 of whom one, having taken it [sc. the crown], has brought it, and crowns him joyfully  
 while the other, supplementing power with victories,  
 brings the spear, the weapon that terrifies adversaries,  
 and gives it into the hand of the ruler.  
 The martyrs fight with him, as with a friend,  
 casting his enemies down before his feet.*

Basil is given the crown as symbol of his power (κράτος). The cognate κραταιός indicates the position of Basileios. The spear symbolizes success in battle.<sup>59</sup> The psalter was probably given to Basileios in 1018, during the celebrations of his victory over the Bulgars.<sup>60</sup>

### III

In the third type of presentation, the epigram does give a name, but it is not clear from the text of the epigram which representative of the name is meant, although this can often be deduced from other historical evidence.

The Kakhuli triptych<sup>61</sup> (currently in the Tbilisi museum), an icon reliquary from the Georgian monastery Gelati, is decorated not only with precious stones and gems, but also with many enamel medallions on gilded silver. Of the central icon, representing a

<sup>58</sup> Ihor Ševčenko, 'The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II', *DOP*, 16 (1962): p. 272, n. 92 (with English translation), fig. 17; Guy Lacam, *Civilization et monnaies byzantines* (Paris, 1974), p. 160, colour fig.; Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pp. 23–24 (24: English translation); Walter, *Prayer and Power*, vol. 4, pp. 193–194, Taf. 11 (B); Cutler and Spieser, *Das mittelalterliche Byzanz*, colour fig. 254; Maguire, 'Images of the Court', p. 186, colour fig.; Gioles, 'Imperial Insignia', p. 65, colour fig. 15; Parani, *Reconstructing*, fig. 110; cf. Vassis, p. 765.

<sup>59</sup> Compare 8, v.8: ῥομφαίαν, ὄπλον ἐκφοβοῦν ἐναντίους.

<sup>60</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pp. 25–26.

<sup>61</sup> The name stems from the Khakhuli monastery on the Khakhuli River in Tao, one of the oldest provinces of Georgia (the site is today in Turkey). The son of David, the founder of the monastery in Gelati, had the icon placed in the triptych, see Titos Papamastorakis, 'Re-deconstructing the Khakhuli Triptych', *DChAE*, IV/23 (2002): p. 226.

Theotokos of the Hodegetria type, only the face and hands in enamel are preserved. The medallion<sup>62</sup> that particularly interests us was made on the occasion of the coronation of Michael VII Doukas in 1071.

The figures shown are the emperor Michael VII Doukas (Parapinakes)<sup>63</sup> and his wife Maria of Alania, who was crowned during the marriage ceremony.<sup>64</sup> Coronation by Christ (who appears here as a bust within a celestial segment, with stars,<sup>65</sup> looking at Michael), is a motif which occurs frequently in Byzantine art<sup>66</sup> and has symbolical meaning. In the epigram Christ himself speaks:

## 9

Στέφω **Μιχαήλ** σὺν **Μαριὰμ** χερσί μου.<sup>67</sup>

*I crown with my hands Michael, together with Maria.*

This inscription, which appears between the two figures (in an accentuated majuscule in red dye) underlines the faith of the emperor, as well as his power, given to him by God. Propagation of the idea of the emperor as elected by God is also the theme of poetry, rhetoric and historiography elsewhere. Interesting from a linguistic point of view is the form of the name *Μαριὰμ*.

The plate may, given its small size and lack of artistic pretension, have been intended as a gift for a foreign ruler of low rank, that is, for Maria's father, the Georgian king Bagrat IV (1027–1072) – Maria could have taken it with her to Georgia in 1072, during a visit to her sick father –,<sup>68</sup> or for his successor George II (1072–1082), who needed the help of the Byzantines against the Seldjuks. The mention of the name in the

<sup>62</sup> It may once, together with five other enamels (depicting Christ flanked by the Theotokos, John the Baptist and the Archangels Michael and Gabriel), have formed the decoration of a crown, see Papamastorakis, 'Re-deconstructing', p. 241.

<sup>63</sup> A nickname given him because he reduced the unit of measurement for corn by a *πινάκιον* without reducing the price.

<sup>64</sup> Grabar, *L'empereur*, p. 118, cf. the crowning of the bridal couple still practiced in the Orthodox Church.

<sup>65</sup> As in the case of Konstantinos X and Eudokia (see 7).

<sup>66</sup> Wessel, *Enamels*, p. 116. Grabar, *L'empereur*, pp. 112ff.

<sup>67</sup> John Gordon Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople. An Introduction to Byzantine Art 330–1453* (London, 1961), p. 110, fig. 136; Wessel, *Enamels*, pp. 115–116, nr. 38, fig. 38; Schalwa Amiranashvili, *Kunstschätze Georgiens* (Prague, 1971), p. 116, fig. 71; Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 38 (with English translation), fig. 11; Bank, *L'art byzantin*, pp. 306–307, nr. 185 (with translation), colour fig.; Nicolas Oikonomides, 'La couronne dite de Constantin Monomaque', *TM*, 12 (1994): p. 248, fig. 17; Papamastorakis, *Re-deconstructing*, p. 242, fig. 11; Tania Velmans, Elka Bakalova, et al. (eds), *Ikonen: Ursprung und Bedeutung* (Stuttgart, 2002), p. 96, colour fig. 76; Eurydice Georganteli and Barrie Cook, *Encounters. Travel and Money in the Byzantine World* (London, 2006), p. 49, colour fig.; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, nr. Me 30; cf. Vassis, p. 689.

<sup>68</sup> Maria could have brought this medaillon as an image of her marriage and coronation, intended for her father's deathbed. Amiranashvili, *Kunstschätze*, p. 120.

epigram was a necessary piece of information for the recipient. Maria was famous for her beauty<sup>69</sup> and appears also on coins<sup>70</sup> (first on the coins of Michael, then on coins of his successor, her second husband Nikephoros III Botaneiates), an honour accorded only to a few Byzantine empresses.

On a staurotheke of gilded silver (with a frame of silver-plated brass), which was once to be found in Constantinople, but is now in San Marco, Venice, the following inscription can be read on the frame:

10

“Ὅν οἱ σταλαγμοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῶν αἱμάτων  
δόξαν θεϊκὴν ἐστόλισαν καὶ κράτος,  
πῶς δοξάζουσι μαργαρίται καὶ λίθοι;  
Σὸς κόσμος ἐστί, σταυρέ, πίστις καὶ πόθος,  
οὕτως σε κοσμεῖ καὶ βασιλὶς Μαρία.”<sup>71</sup>

5

*(Cross), which the drops of God's blood  
Have adorned with divine grace and power,  
How can pearls and gems glorify you?  
Faith and love are your adornments, cross,  
And in this manner the empress Maria also adorns you.*

One should read this epigram in the following order: top, bottom left, bottom right. The preserved staurotheke is a Renaissance copy of a lost Byzantine staurotheke.

The empress Maria addresses the cross, presents herself (in the third person) as the patron, and declares that the cross, sanctified by the drops of God's blood, should be adorned with faith and love, which is what she does here. It is probable that the Maria here is also Maria of Albania. She may have commissioned the staurotheke for Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Other women of the same name must be ruled out because of the accentuation of the text, and for other reasons to do with palaeography.<sup>72</sup>

In the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (the *Kunstskammer*) is an ivory plate, perhaps used as a votive icon, which bears the following epigram above the heads of the apostles:

<sup>69</sup> Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, book III, ch. 2, §4, see note 29.

<sup>70</sup> See Georganteli and Cook, *Encounters*, p. 48.

<sup>71</sup> Anatole Frolov, *La relique de la vraie croix* (Paris, 1961), pp. 296–297, nr. 273; Enrica Follieri, ‘L'ordine dei versi in alcuni epigrammi bizantini’, *Byz*, 34 (1964): pp. 453–454; André Guillou, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d'Italie* (Rome, 1996), p. 85, nr. 80 (with French translation), 80a and 80b; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, nr. Me 89; cf. Vassis, p. 531.

<sup>72</sup> Guillou, *Recueil*, p. 85.

## 11

Ὡς αὐτάδελφοι μυστολέκται τῶν ἄνω  
νέμοιτε λύτρον **δεσπότη Κωνσταντίνῳ**.<sup>73</sup>

*As (corporeal) brothers, mystolektai<sup>74</sup> of the world above,  
May you give deliverance to the ruler Konstantinos.*

On the image, the apostles Andrew and Peter, who were brothers,<sup>75</sup> stand on a podium adorned with arcades. They are identified by inscriptions next to their heads. Their right hands are raised in blessing; their left hands hold a scroll. Andrew and Peter were *Mystolektai*, that is, 'proclaimers of the divine mystery'; or, since the term was used in the eleventh century for the imperial private secretary,<sup>76</sup> perhaps occupied a corresponding office in heaven. They are requested to give deliverance to Konstantinos.

Rather than dating it to the middle of the tenth century and, consequently, identifying Konstantinos as Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos, Rhoby places the epigram in the eleventh century and considers it to refer either to Konstantinos IX Monomachos or to Konstantinos X Doukas.<sup>77</sup> This applies also to a similar ivory plate (probably also used as an icon) in the Museo Archeologico in Venice,<sup>78</sup> bearing the following inscription:

## 12

Σκεῦος θεουργὸν συλλαλεῖ τῷ παρθένῳ  
βλάβης σκέπασθαι **δεσπότην Κωνσταντίνον**.<sup>79</sup>

*The instrument of God converses with the virginal one  
To safeguard the ruler Konstantinos from damage.*

<sup>73</sup> Ormond M. Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, 1911), p. 229; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, vol. 2, p. 39, table XIX, and fig. 44; Kurt Weitzmann, 'Ivories', in *Byzantine Art and European Art* (Athens, 1964), p. 170, nr. 72; Hermann Fillitz, in Gerhart Egger (ed.), *Kunst der Ostkirche. Ikonen, Handschriften, Kultgeräte* (Vienna, 1977), p. 106, nr. 22 and fig. 37; Annemarie Weyl Carr, 'Popular Imagery', in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, p. 141, nr. 89 (with English translation), colour fig. 89A; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, nr. El 32; cf. Vassis, p. 896.

<sup>74</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, vol. 2, p. 39, Nr. 44; Egger, *Kunst der Ostkirche*, p. 106 translate this as 'Verkünder des göttlichen Mysteriums'.

<sup>75</sup> Mt. 4:18.

<sup>76</sup> LBG: 'Verkünder des Mysteriums' and 'Geheimsekretär'; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, under the nr. El 32.

<sup>77</sup> Rhoby, *ibidem*.

<sup>78</sup> For a dating to the tenth century: Guillou, *Recueil*, p. 80, Nr. 76; Weitzmann, 'Ivories', p. 171; Johanna Flemming, *Byzantinische Schatzkunst* (Berlin, 1979), p. 71.

<sup>79</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, vol. 2, p. 39, Nr. 45 (with German translation); Guillou, *Recueil*, p. 80, nr. 76 (with French translation); Weyl Carr, 'Imagery', p. 142, nr. 89B, colour fig. 89 B (with English translation); Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, nr. El 31; cf. Vassis, p. 674.

Paul, the instrument of God, and John, are prepared to intercede for Konstantinos: the emperor's welfare is dependent on their concerted efforts.

The same epigram is also to be read on an ivory plate in Dresden.<sup>80</sup> On both plates the saints hold gospels.

#### IV

The fourth possible type of presentation of names in epigrams is that of clear identification through use of the cognomen. This type is present in only a few epigrams which mention emperors.

The miniature in codex *Sinait. gr.* 364, which is to be dated to the eleventh century, shows on fol. 3<sup>r</sup> Konstantinos IX Monomachos with his wife Zoe,<sup>81</sup> whom he married in 1042, and her sister Theodora. Inscriptions with the official titles inform us as to their identity: Κωνσταντ(ίνος) ἐν Χ(ριστῷ) τῷ θ(ε)ῷ πιστὸς βασιλε(ὺς) αὐτοκράτ(ωρ) Ῥωμαίων ὁ Μονομάχος/Ζωὴ εὐσεβεστάτη Αὐγούστ(α) ἡ πορφυρογέννητ(ος)<sup>82</sup>/Θεοδώρα Αὐγούστα ἡ πορφυρογέννητ(ος). The emperor and his wife are praised in this inscription for their pious behavior: πιστός and εὐσεβεστάτη. The connection between power and faith is again emphasized.

Christ can be seen in the *mandorla* above the emperor; from his hands, beams of light reach the heads of both women. Two angels hold the crowns intended for the Augustai above their heads; the crown intended for Konstantinos lies at Christ's feet.<sup>83</sup> What is represented here is elevation to a celestial sphere, something that is also indicated by the clothing, particularly the *loros* of the emperor and the gold of the garments, which unites with the golden background and indicates the dematerialized nature of the figures. On the basis of these portraits, the codex can be dated to the year 1042, or the time between 1042 and 1050 (the death of Zoe). The manuscript, containing 45 homilies of Ioannes Chrysostomos on Matthew, is a book intended as a gift. It was probably given by Konstantinos to the monastery which he founded, after his ascension in 1042, in the Mangana quarter of Constantinople. In the sixteenth century, Michael Ialynas, a member of a well-known Cretan family, gave it to the Sinai monastery.

The text of the epigram runs around the decorative frame, as a frame epigram. It is to be read in the following order: top, right (top to bottom), left (top to bottom), bottom. Monomachos is mentioned by name, arguably to identify the trinity indicated here.

<sup>80</sup> Images of both objects in: Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, vol. 2, table XIX, fig. 43 (Venice) and 45 (Dresden); Weyl Carr, 'Imagery', p. 142, fig. 89 B (Venice), p. 143, fig. 90 (Dresden).

<sup>81</sup> As also in the mosaic in Hagia Sophia in Istanbul: see Thomas Whittemore, 'A Portrait of the Empress Zoe and of Constantine IX', *Byz*, 18 (1946–48): pp. 223–227; Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 101, fig. 67.

<sup>82</sup> The ending πορφυρογέννητῃ in Walter, *Prayer and Power*, vol. 4, p. 195 is an oversight, because the feminine form of the adjective also ends with -ος.

<sup>83</sup> The coronation scene is reminiscent of Basileios II: see 8.



## 13

Ὡς τῆς τριάδος, σῶτερ, εἷς, παντοκράτορ,  
 τῶν γῆς ἀνάκτων τὴν φαεινὴν τρι[άδα]  
 σκέποις **κράτιστον δεσπότην Μονομάχον**  
**ὁμαιμόνων ζεῦγος τε πορφύρας κλάδ[ον].**<sup>84</sup>

*As one of the Trinity,<sup>85</sup> Saviour, may you, Pantokrator,  
 protect the shining trinity of earthly rulers:  
 the most mighty lord Monomachos  
 and his two kinsfolk, branch of the porphyra (purple).*

In the epigram, the phrase φαεινή (τριάς) makes one think of the shining sun, with which the emperor is often compared, with Zoe as the moon and Theodora as a star, to quote Mauroπους.<sup>86</sup> The comparison of the imperial couple with sun and moon (as in 1) is a *topos* in Byzantine literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>87</sup> In a variation, in his description of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, Konstantinos Rhodios (tenth century) compares Christ with the sun, the Theotokos with the moon, and the apostles with the stars.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, p. 100 (with English translation), fig. 66; Dieter Harlfinger, Dieter R. Reinsch and Joseph A.M. Sonderkamp (eds), *Specimina Sinaitica. Die datierten griechischen Handschriften des Katharinen-Klosters auf dem Berg Sinai, 9. bis 12. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1983), p. 24, nr. 9; Konstantinos A. Manaphes (ed.), *ΣΙΝΑ. Οἱ Θεσσαυροὶ τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Ἁγίας Αἰκατερίνης* (Athens, 1990), p. 331, colour fig. 8; Weitzmann and Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine*, pp. 66–67, nr. 24, plate 78, fig. 185; George Galavaris, *Πρώιμες εἰκόνες στὸ Σινὰ ἀπὸ τὸν 6<sup>ο</sup> ὡς τὸν 11<sup>ο</sup> αἰῶνα* (Sinai, 1990), pp. 315–316, figs. 8 and 9; Walter, *Prayer and Power*, vol. 4, pp. 195–196 (with English translation), plate 12; Oikonomides, ‘La couronne’, p. 246, fig. 14; Cutler and Spieser, *Das mittelalterliche Byzanz*, colour fig. 263; Marava–Chatzinikolaou, ‘Τριφεγγής’, pp. 221–222, fig. 1; Evangelatou and Papastavrou, *Byzantium: An Oecumenical Empire*, p. 87, nr. 16, plate 12, colour fig.; Papamastorakis, ‘Orb of the Earth’, p. 88, p. 99, fig. 12; cf. Vassis, p. 907.

<sup>85</sup> Walter, p. 195 also translates this as: ‘as one of the Trinity, Saviour Pantocrator’; Weitzmann and Galavaris, *The monastery of Saint Catherine*, p. 66 and Spatharakis, p. 100 translate it as: ‘as the one Pantokrator of the Trinity’, which is in my opinion not tenable from a theological point of view.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. L 54. 121–122: τὸν ἥλιον ... τὴν σελήνην ... τὸ φαιδρὸν ἄστρον ... and L 55.7, 26–31, 35.

<sup>87</sup> Charalampos G. Chotzakoglou, ‘Ein spätbyzantinisches Opus sectile-Paviment in der Klosterkirche von Mega Spelaion, Peloponnes: Technik, Thematik und Symbolik’, in *Byzantina et Neograeca Vindobonensia* (Vienna, 2001), p. 124. This comparison is also to be found in the dedicatory epigram on fol. 4<sup>v</sup> of the *Barberini* psalter, v. 7; see: Marava–Chatzinikolaou, ‘Τριφεγγής’, p. 223.

<sup>88</sup> Emile Legrand, ‘Description des œuvres d’art et de l’église des Saints Apôtres de Constantinople. Poème en vers iambiques par Constantin le Rhodien’, *REG*, 9 (1896): p. 58, vv. 737–741: ὡς ἥλιον μέν Χριστὸν ... ὡς δ’ αὖ σελήνην τὴν ἄχραντον παρθένον, ὡς ἀστέρας δὲ τοὺς σοφούς Ἀποστόλους; Chotzakoglou, ‘Opus sectile-Paviment’, p. 121.



In the epigram, Christ is presented as one person of the Trinity and as Ruler of All. He is requested to protect Monomachos with his wife and sister-in-law. It is interesting that Βασιλεὺς αὐτοκράτωρ, in the inscription next to the miniature, corresponds with Σωτὴρ παντοκράτωρ in the epigram. The emphatic use of κράτιστος δεσπότης, as opposed to the simple ζεύγος, makes the emperor stand out as does Christ. He is one of the earthly trinity, the Autokrator, and he is the only one to be crowned by Christ. The reigning power is, as in our first example (1), represented by three persons.<sup>89</sup> Ioannes Mauroπους also refers to these three imperial persons, in letters to the emperor and in epigrams.<sup>90</sup> The analogy being made between Trinity in heaven and trinity on earth (a relatively common analogy in Byzantium) is obvious.<sup>91</sup>

The use of names in this epigram helps us to identify who is referred to by the general term ‘earthly ruler’ in the epigram which frames the miniature on the opposite page, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>. In this miniature, Matthew gives his gospel to Ioannes Chrysostomos, and both request for the earthly rulers a peaceful life and the fulfillment of pious wishes.

## 14

Εἰς εὐσύνοπτον τοῦ τελώνου τοὺς λόγους  
τιθείς ὁ χρυσοῦς τὸν λόγον καὶ τὸν τρόπον  
αἰτεῖ σὺν αὐτῷ τοῖς κρατοῦσι τῶν κάτω  
βίου γαλήνην καὶ μέθεξιν τῶν ἄνω.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> In 1042, Konstantinos married Zoe and became συμβασιλεὺς with Zoe and her sister Theodora. This συμβασιλεία lasted only three months (see: Psellos, *Chronographia*, book VI, § 21). A similar συμβασιλεία is depicted in the *Barberini* psalter 372, fol. 5. Since there is no inscription, one can perhaps infer that the subjects depicted are Romanos IV Diogenes, Eudokia, and their son Michael (Marava–Chatzinikolaou, ‘Τριφεγγής’, fig. 2), see 1. They are also depicted on the crown of Monomachos that was sent as a diplomatic gift to Hungary. On this crown, imperial virtues are depicted through personifications of Ταπεινῳσις (modesty) and Ἀλήθεια (truth): Cutler and Spieser, *Das mittelalterliche Byzanz*, p. 332, fig. 264–266; Ousterhout, ‘Secular Architecture’, p. 210, nr. 145, colour fig. 145; Evangelatou and Papastavrou, *Byzantium: An Oecumenical Empire*, pp. 78–83, nr. 14, colour fig.

<sup>90</sup> Mauroπους, *Letters*, p. 107, ep. 26, 78–80: τὴν σὴν γαλήνότητα καὶ τὰς ἀγνωτάτας δεσποίνας καὶ βασιλίσσας ἡμῶν, οὓς ἡ θεία τριάς (...) συντηρήσοι (...), and p. 117, ep. 30, 9–10: συνεορτάζω τῇ χρυσῇ ξυνοριδί τῶν σοφῶν τε καὶ καλῶν αὐταδέλφων (...). See also L 55.1: δισσαῖς ἀνάσσαις αὐταδέλφαις Αὐγούσαις; L 55.29–30: σὴν αὐταδέλφην γνησίαν καὶ φιλότατην, / ἥ συμμετέσχεας καὶ γένους καὶ τοῦ στέφους, / ἥ συμμερίξῃ τοῦ κράτους τὰς ἡνίας; 71.8: ταῖς σαῖς πανσεβάστοις Αὐγούσαις; 72.5: καὶ τὰς Αὐγούστας ὡς συνεργοὺς λαμβάνω.

<sup>91</sup> The idea of trinity is also present in a poem of Manuel Holobolos, in which the emperor Michael VIII and his sons are entertained as angelic guests by Abraham, see: J.-F. Boissonade (ed.), *Anecdota Graeca* (Paris, 1829–1833, repr. Hildesheim, 1962), vol. 5, pp. 167–168, nr. 7.

<sup>92</sup> Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pp. 100–101 (with English translation); Harlfinger, Reinsch and Sonderkamp, *Specimina Sinaitica*, pp. 23–24, nr.9; Weitzmann and Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine*, pp. 65–66, nr. 24, colour fig. XIV; Cutler and Spieser, *Das mittelalterliche Byzanz*, colour fig. 262; Evangelatou and Papastavrou, *Byzantium*, p. 86, nr. 16, colour fig.; cf. Vassil, p. 196.

*The words of the tax-collector are made easily understandable  
by the man who is golden in word and deed,  
and he entreats with him, for the rulers of the world below,  
a peaceful life and participation in the world above.*

Verses 1 and 2 speak of the relationship of the two to each other: Chrysostomos composed homilies to explain the Gospel of Matthew. Their gestures, in my opinion, indicate that Church Father is receiving the gospel from Matthew. Verses 3 and 4 speak of both entreating on behalf of the rulers, but there is nothing in the picture which indicates this.

## V

The fifth type of presentation concerns high officials, who are all mentioned by name.

One of the few profane objects is the Astrolabe (Astrolabium) that was made in Constantinople in the year 1062, but has been held since 1844 in the Museo Civico in Brescia (*Inv. Strum. Scient.* Nr. 36). The astrolabium ('reaching to the stars') is an instrument for making astronomical measurements. This piece of equipment is a rare example of a scientific instrument from this period.

## 15

Εἰκὼν ἑναργὴς οὐρανοῦ κινήματων  
σαφῶς τρανοῦσα τὸν δρόμον τῶν ἀστέρων  
ῥῶν τροπᾶς τε καὶ χρόνων διεξόδους  
ἦν σὺν πόθῳ τέτευχεν οὖσαν ποικίλην  
**Περσῶν γένους Σέργιος ὑπατος** πέλων.<sup>93</sup>

5

*A distinct image of the movements of the sky  
That clearly shows the course of the stars,  
The changes of the seasons and the passing of the years,  
Which, in all its variety, has been commissioned with ardent zeal  
By Sergios, a consul of Persian origin.*

The epigram gives a description of the function of the instrument, and then mentions in verses 4 and 5 the man who commissioned it, of whom we know nothing more than what is said here: that is, that he was a consul<sup>94</sup> of Persian origin. From a prose inscription

<sup>93</sup> Weitzmann, 'Ivories', p. 451, nr. 549. Alexander Jones, *An Eleventh-Century Manual of Arabo-Byzantine Astronomy* (Amsterdam, 1987), p. 15, fig. on cover leaf; Guillou, *Recueil*, p. 15, nr. 13 (with French translation), plates 3–4, nr. 13b and 13d; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, nr. Me 52; cf. Vassil, p. 184.

<sup>94</sup> ODB, p. 964: ὑπατος as a higher rank than *protospatharios*, see also: Nicolas Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX<sup>e</sup> et X<sup>e</sup> siècles. Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire*

on the back we learn that he was also *protospatharios*, and that the instrument is to be dated to the year 1062.

In the *arcosolium* of the crypt in the church of Saints Marina and Christina in Carpignano Salentino, near Otranto, in southern Italy, there is a depiction of St Christina, accompanied by inscriptions which are to be dated roughly to the period between 1055 and 1075.<sup>95</sup> To the left, a painted funerary inscription for a child can be read, and to the right a second inscription, in which the father of the child, a *spatharios*<sup>96</sup> from Carpignano, informs us of the adornment of the crypt with new icons and the digging of his own grave:

16

Ἐ]παμφίασα εἰκόνας καινουργίαις,<sup>97</sup>  
τύμβον ὥρυξα πρὸς ταφὴν καὶ κηδείαν  
τοῦ σώματός μου τοῦ γηγίνου πλασθέντος.  
Περὶ δὲ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὀνόματος λέγεις·  
Ἦ τίς ἤ καὶ πόθεν ἤ ὁ μέροψ οὗτος;  
[ ... ]υρα[ ... ] τοῦνο[μ]α, καλὸς τοῖς τρόπο[ις],  
**σπ[α]θ[α]ρίος** τ[ε] οἰκῶν **ἐν Καρ[πι]νιάνα**,  
ὑπου[ργός] Χριστ[οῦ] καὶ τῶν ἁγίων τούτων,  
τῆς παναχράντου δεσποίνης θεοτόκου  
καὶ [Νι]κολάου τ[οῦ] Μύρων [ἐπισκόπου]<sup>98</sup>  
[ ..... ]<sup>99</sup>

5  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10

*I have adorned the images with renovations,  
I have dug a grave for the interment and burial  
Of my body, formed out of earth.  
About my name you will say:  
Who is this mortal and where does he come from?  
... is his name, decent in his character  
Spatharios, and living in Carpignano,*

(Paris, 1972), p. 296.

<sup>95</sup> André Jacob, 'L'inscription métrique de l'enfeu de Carpignano', *RSBN*, 20–21 (1983–1984): p. 113.

<sup>96</sup> On the diffusion of this title, see Oikonomides, *Les listes*, p. 298 and note 62.

<sup>97</sup> In using the reading *καινουργίαις* I follow Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, p. 269, and his arguments on p. 271, namely: although the bad preservation of the text does not permit a firm conclusion, *καινουργίαις* is to be preferred, because *εἰκόνας καινουργίας* can only be understood as an accusative of respect, in which case an object such as 'the wall' (so Jacob, 'L'inscription', p. 109) must be supplied mentally.

<sup>98</sup> Conjecture of Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, p. 269.

<sup>99</sup> Jacob, 'L'inscription', pp. 108–109; Marina Falla Castelfranchi, *Pittura monumentale bizantina in Puglia* (Milan, 1991), p. 68, colour fig. 46; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, pp. 269–272; cf. Vassis, p. 244.

*Servant of Christ and these saints,  
The wholly immaculate mistress, the mother of God,  
And Nicholas, the bishop of Myra.  
[.....]*

The name of the Spatharios<sup>100</sup> from Carpignano is unfortunately not preserved, but was certainly originally present in the inscription. He presents himself as the servant of Christ, of the local saints, of the Theotokos and of Nicholas and perhaps of the saint Christina, if she was mentioned in verse 11. He declares that he has renovated the images – that is, that he has restored certain parts of the crypt – and has dug his own grave.

On a funeral plaque, Dionysios Kampsorymes presents himself as the superior of his spiritual community (v. 2) and founder of the church (v. 1). Avraméa<sup>101</sup> surmises that Dionysios Kampsorymes was metropolitan<sup>102</sup> of Larissa, and believes that he is identical with a Dionysios Synkellos on a seal,<sup>103</sup> on which however only the beginning of the family name is preserved. She dates the epigram to the eleventh century because the title synkellos<sup>104</sup> disappeared in the final years of the eleventh century.

The inscription, now lost, was discovered in the ruins of the apse of a church in Ambeliki, near Stomion in Thessaly.

## 17

Δομήτορα θείου δόμου πεφηνό[τα]  
καὶ ποιμενάρχην τῶν λογικῶν θρεμμάτων  
οὗτος με μικρὸς ἔνδοθεν κρύπτει λίθος  
**Διονύσιον σύγκελλον Καμψορύμην**  
Τῇρει δὲν ἀμετακίνητον εἰς τέλος  
ναὶ δὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς Τριάδος παναγίας  
πρόγραμμα πιστὸς πᾶς βλέπων, εἰ μὴ λόγον  
βούλει παρασχεῖν ἡμέρᾳ φρικτῆς δίκης.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> The last mention of this title in Italy dates to 1086 (in the east, 1075): Jacob, 'L'inscription', p. 112.

<sup>101</sup> According to Avraméa, 'Monastères et hommes d'église en Grèce: À propos de deux epigrammes', *TM*, 8 (1981): pp. 33–34, ποιμενάρχης is a poetic equivalent of metropolitan and the title σύγκελλος is attested from the second half of the tenth century to the end of the eleventh: Athenagoras (Metropolitan of Paramythia and Parga), 'Ὁ θεσμός τῶν συγκελλῶν ἐν τῷ οἰκουμένικῳ πατριαρχείῳ', *EEBS*, 5 (1928): pp. 169–192.

<sup>102</sup> There is, however, no Dionysios in the lists of metropolitans *synkelloi* of the eleventh century; see Venance Grumel, 'Titulature de métropolitains byzantines', *REB*, 3 (1945): pp. 110–114.

<sup>103</sup> Vitalien Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin* (Paris, 1963), vol. 5.1, nr. 239.

<sup>104</sup> See also Jean Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ de l'église byzantine* (Paris, 1970), p. 18, pp. 53–54, p. 79.

<sup>105</sup> Georgios A. Soteriou, 'Βυζαντινὰ μνημεῖα τῆς Θεσσαλίας II' καὶ ΙΔ' αἰῶνος', *EEBS*, 5 (1928): p. 374, fig. 28: Soteriou dates our inscription to the thirteenth century or the beginning

*I, who have shown myself as the builder of a divine house  
And keeper of my spiritual children  
I am now hidden inside this small stone,  
Dionysios Kampsorymes, synkellos.  
Preserve it (this stone) unmoved until the end,  
Yea, in the name of the most holy Trinity itself,  
Every believer who sees this pronouncement, if you do not wish  
To give account on the day of terrible judgment.*

In spite of the mention of his merits in service to the church, Dionysios is now, on the gravestone, conscious of his mortality. This contrast is expressed in the epigram by the opposition between tall man/small grave stone. He warns the faithful not to remove this stone, otherwise they will have to give account on the Day of Last Judgement.

## Conclusion

In the epigrams dealing with emperors, the same encomiastic features are present that are also frequent in other literature. The Byzantine emperor is represented as a light-giving morning-star (5) and is crowned with virtues (5). In this way, his subjects could appeal to his benevolence (3, 5, 6). The belief in election by God<sup>106</sup> is clearly present in those epigrams that mention the transfer of power (coronation) to the emperor (8) or to the imperial couple (7, 9), or Christ's protection of this power for the imperial couple and regents (benediction: 1, 4, 13), and even more when the earthly trinity of rulers is compared with the divine Trinity (1, 13). Celestial powers can mediate the benevolence of the emperor (6).<sup>107</sup>

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of the fourteenth. He reads in the first verse πέφηνέ [με], which I fail to understand; Avraméa, 'Monastères', pp. 33–34; Anne Avraméa and Denis Feissel, 'Inscriptions de Thessalie. Inscriptions du XI<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle', *TM*, 10 (1987): p. 369 (with French translation), nr. 13. plate IV, fig. 2 (taken from Soteriou); Andreas Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*. Band 3: *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein* (in preparation); cf. Vassis, p. 151.

<sup>106</sup> This can be seen, for example, in an epigram of Mauropous (L 72.2: ὁ τὸ κράτος (...) ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχων) and in his letter to Monomachos: Mauropous, *Letters*, p. 103, ep. 26,1: δέσποτα μου ἅγιε, θεοδόξαστε καὶ θεόστεπτε: see note 42; p. 103, ep. 26, 8: εἰκὼν καὶ ὁμοίωμα καὶ τύπος ὦν Χριστοῦ, p. 107, ep. 26, 67: θεοῦ μιμητά, p. 105, ep 26, 35–37: θεὸν, τὸν τῆς σῆς σωτηρίας καὶ βασιλείας προστάτην, ὃς ὑπέταξε πάντας τοὺς ἀποστατοῦντας ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας σου.

<sup>107</sup> Maguire, 'Heavenly Court', p. 249.

However, awareness that the emperor is dependent on superhuman aid leads to prayers for protection, addressed to Christ (4) and to the apostles Andrew and Peter (11), Paul and John (12). In the case of high-ranking officials, it seems to be typical for the epigrams to emphasize their name, function, and deeds (production of an astrolabe 15, decoration of a crypt 16, building of a church and intercession for the spiritual community 17). The intention of the composers of the epigrams was clearly to present the persons mentioned or referred to in a positive light.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> This article has its origins in work undertaken as part of the project 'Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung', coordinated by Prof. Wolfram Hörandner.

PART IV  
Authors

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## Chapitre 7

### Διὰ βραχέων ἐπέων (K 83.2)

# Stratégies de composition dans les calendriers métriques de Christophore Mitylenaios

Lia Raffaella Cresci

Au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, la poésie, bien que se conformant aux genres et aux usages enracinés dans la tradition, explore de nouvelles voies et invente des formes insolites de communication, qui ne se limitent pas au seul domaine littéraire. Christophore Mitylenaios est un auteur significatif à cet égard. Il est surtout connu par son *Canzoniere*, caractérisé par des compositions qui présentent des contenus et un nombre de mètres différents, et reprennent une vaste gamme de thèmes exploités par la production épigrammatique considérée dans son acception la plus large.<sup>1</sup> En plus, il nous a laissé un *corpus* entier de *Calendriers*, qui représentent, par bien des aspects, un apport original<sup>2</sup> et qui témoignent d'une extraordinaire complexité. Christophore met à profit des compétences vastes et raffinées dans le domaine de l'hagiographie<sup>3</sup> et de l'hymnographie<sup>4</sup> pour donner naissance à un genre qui se situe au point d'intersection de diverses traditions et qui tend à une utilisation que nous pourrions qualifier d'instrumentale.<sup>5</sup> Ce n'est pas un hasard si, quelque temps après l'époque de leur composition, deux de ses *Calendriers* (ceux qui présentaient un mètre classique), entreront dans la tradition M du *Synaxaire* de

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<sup>1</sup> Voir Marc D. Lauxtermann, *The Byzantine Epigram in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries* (Amsterdam, 1994); Marc D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienne, 2003), pp. 131–147; Athanasios Kambylis, 'Das griechische Epigram in byzantinischer Zeit', *WJA*, 20 (1994–1995): pp. 19–47; Wolfram Hörandner, 'Customs and Beliefs as Reflected in Occasional Poetry: Some Considerations', *BF*, 12 (1987): pp. 235–247; Wolfram Hörandner, 'Zu einigen religiösen Epigrammen', dans Ugo Criscuolo and Riccardo Malsano (éd.), *Synodia. Studia humanistica A. Garzya septuagenario ab amicis atque discipulis dicata* (Naples, 1997), pp. 431–442.

<sup>2</sup> Voir Enrica Follieri, *I calendari in metro innografico di Cristoforo Mitileneo* (2 vol., Bruxelles, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 6–15.

<sup>3</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 182–191; Enrica Follieri, 'Un bollandista «ante litteram»: Cristoforo Mitileneo', *Studi bizantini e neogreci, Atti del IV Congresso nazionale di Studi Bizantini* (Galatina, 1983), pp. 279–284.

<sup>4</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 196–197.

<sup>5</sup> Voir Antonio Garzya, *Testi letterari d'uso strumentale a Bisanzio*, dans Idem, *Il mandarino e il quotidiano* (Naples, 1985), pp. 37–71; Paola Volpe Cacciatore, 'L'epigramma come testo letterario di uso strumentale', *JÖB*, 32 (1982): pp. 11–20; Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 26–34.

Constantinople,<sup>6</sup> et connaîtront ainsi non seulement une très large diffusion mais aussi une utilisation intensive dans la liturgie.

La dimension hagiographique et liturgique de l'entreprise de Christophore a été examinée de manière exhaustive par Follieri.<sup>7</sup> Il n'en va pas de même de sa dimension plus strictement rhétorique et littéraire, celle-ci ayant fait l'objet de jugements peu élogieux qui, encore qu'ils soient prononcés par de véritables autorités dans le domaine hagiographique,<sup>8</sup> ne témoignent pas du succès que cet auteur obtint pendant une longue période et à différents niveaux.<sup>9</sup> Un progrès décisif vers une analyse plus systématique du rapport entre la forme littéraire et les intentions communicatives de ce nouveau genre fut obtenu par Herbert Hunger, qui, à travers l'analyse du sens des noms propres<sup>10</sup> a imprimé à cette étude une orientation très féconde.

Il est intéressant de souligner que les *Calendriers* composés sous une forme métrique fort éloignée de la tradition de l'hymnographie plus traditionnelle (à savoir ceux en iambes et en hexamètres) sont entrés dans le *Synaxaire* et dans les *Ménées*, à la place des *Calendriers* en stichères et en canons, qui reflètent dans leur structure des procédés rythmiques qui sont plus fortement enracinés dans le domaine liturgique.<sup>11</sup> Une des principales raisons de ce choix paradoxal doit probablement être liée à la structure des *Calendriers* en mètre classique, où chaque composition, bien que dans la forme succincte du monostique et du distique, est autonome et fournit les données fondamentales sur le saint ou les saints célébrés à chaque jour de l'année liturgique. Cette caractéristique a probablement facilité leur exploitation dans les livres liturgiques, qui présentent en séquence les données biographiques et les coordonnées hagiographiques de tous les saints.

Le trait caractéristique des distiques et monostiques est donc leur capacité de combiner les données essentielles de la présentation du saint<sup>12</sup> avec des notes qui fournissent une présentation incisive du sens de son histoire et de sa *αἵρεσις*. Ce résultat est obtenu par une stratégie expressive qui vise à une condensation maximum, à une *συντομία* qui est liée aux origines du genre épigrammatique et qui représente une veine dont on trouve constamment des témoignages dans la poésie byzantine, qui est pourtant en général très encline à la *μακρολογία* et à l'exubérance.

<sup>6</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 217–224.

<sup>7</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 128–211.

<sup>8</sup> L'opinion de Hippolyte Delchaye est célèbre: 'Le synaxaire de Sirmond', *AB*, 14 (1895): pp. 401–403.

<sup>9</sup> Sans tenir compte du succès dans le monde slave: Enrica Follieri et Ivan Dujcev, 'Il calendario in sticheri di Cristoforo di Mitilene', *ByzSl*, 25 (1964): pp. 1–36; Lia Raffaella Cresci et Lilija Skomorochova Venturini, *I Versetti del Prolog Stisnoj*, vol. 1 (Turin, 1999); Lia Raffaella Cresci, Amalia Delponte et Lilija Skomorochova Venturini, *I Versetti del Prolog Stisnoj*, vol. 2 (Turin, 2002). Voir le vaste exposé dans Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 224–321.

<sup>10</sup> Voir Herbert Hunger, 'Byzantinische Namensdeutungen in iambischen Synaxarversen', *Byzantinica*, 13 (1983): pp. 1–16.

<sup>11</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 48–66.

<sup>12</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 204–211.

Georges de Pisidie<sup>13</sup> avait déjà dédié un grand nombre de ses distiques iambiques à la célébration de saints<sup>14</sup> créant ainsi un précédent de l'action innovatrice de Christophore, qui fait justement de la concision, du rythme serré, la clé stylistique de sa construction complexe, comme il l'a explicitement déclaré dans le poème du *Canzoniere* qui fait fonction d'*inscriptio* du *Calendrier* iambique: διὰ βραχέων ἐπέων.<sup>15</sup>

La présente analyse entend développer quelques filons de recherche sur les expédients et les stratégies de composition de Christophore, qui obtient, grâce à la συντομία<sup>16</sup> et à une apparente simplicité, les effets de μεγαλοπρέπεια et de γοργότης.

## Les monostiques hexamétriques

Le *Calendrier* hexamétrique, dont la composition fait étroitement référence au calendrier iambique,<sup>17</sup> a pour principale fonction d'indiquer la date. Au sein de l'espace textuel exigu d'un vers doivent figurer l'indication du jour (et également du mois, dans le cas du premier jour), le nom du saint célébré et les particularités de sa mort. Ces impératifs structuraux n'empêchent pas Christophore d'imaginer différents éléments syntaxiques qui mettent en valeur les différents acteurs de l'histoire hagiographique. Le schéma le plus fréquent prévoit que le sujet soit le saint: δωδεκάτη Μελέτιος ἔδν χθόνα πουλυβότειραν<sup>18</sup> ou bien, en cas de martyr, les bourreaux: κόψαν Ἀλεξάνδροιο κάραν δεκάτη γε τετάρτη.<sup>19</sup> Dans certains cas, le rôle central est accordé au jour, qui est toujours mis en évidence avec beaucoup d'emphase, étant donné son rôle de

<sup>13</sup> Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 334–337.

<sup>14</sup> Luigi Tartaglia, 'Sugli epigrammi di Giorgio di Pisidia', *SicGymn*, 57 (2004): p. 812.

<sup>15</sup> Voir K 83.2. Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, p. 210 pense à un épigraphe précédant les *Calendriers* en mètre classique; Giuseppina Musumeci dans Carmelo Crimi et al., *Cristoforo di Mitilene, Canzoniere* (Catania, 1983), p. 126 semble pencher uniquement pour le *Calendrier* iambique.

<sup>16</sup> Voir Demetrius, *De elocutione*, éd. P. Chiron (Paris, 1993), p. 103 et 137; Demetrius, éd. N. Marini, *Demetrio. Lo stile* (Rome, 2007), p. 208, p. 230. En réalité, συντομία et βραχύτης se réfèrent à deux λέξεις, la μεγαλοπρέπεια et la δεινότης, cette dernière étant caractéristique de Demetrius (voir Demetrius, *Lo stile*, p. 19, pp. 33–35), dont l'oeuvre est connue et commentée au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle par Grégoire de Corinthe (Demetrius, *Lo stile*, pp. 6–7).

<sup>17</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 204–205; Enrica Follieri, 'Il Calendario giambico di Cristoforo di Mitilene secondo i Mss. *Palat. Gr.* 383 e *Paris. Gr.* 3041', *AB*, 77 (1959): pp. 263–269.

<sup>18</sup> S. Mélétius, 12 février. Le texte des monostiques hexamétriques est repris du commentaire qui accompagne l'édition des calendriers liturgiques par Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, ici p. 167.

<sup>19</sup> S. Alexandre, 14 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 199.

coordonnée hagiographique fondamentale: ὁγδὴ οὐρανίῳ κυδαίνει τάγματος ἀρχόν,<sup>20</sup> μνήμην ἐβδομάτῃ Προδρόμου λάχεν αἰδοίῳ,<sup>21</sup> εἰκὰς Ζαχαρίῳ ἐπέδρακε τέρμα τετάρτῃ.<sup>22</sup>

L'importance quantitative des martyrs se traduit par l'apparition fréquente du schéma syntaxique qui attribue une fonction centrale à l'instrument ou à la forme du martyr, engendrant des effets mnémoniques très efficaces et une association immédiate entre le nom du saint et les modalités du martyr: παῖδας καὶ Βαβύλαν πέφνε ξίφος ἀμφὶ τετάρτῃ,<sup>23</sup> ἀνέρας ὁγδοάτῃ κτάνεν εἰκάδι δυσμυρίου πῦρ.<sup>24</sup> Parfois, ce schéma parvient à fournir des informations détaillées même dans le cas de plusieurs saints, victimes de différentes formes de martyr, dont la mention est parfaitement mise en évidence par le chiasme des instruments du sacrifice et des noms propres: Σέργιον ἐβδομάτῃ ξίφος ἔκτανεν, νεῦρα δὲ Βάκχον.<sup>25</sup> Cette scansion syntaxique permet, quand il est nécessaire, d'insérer les éléments les plus caractéristiques de la forme du martyr, comme dans le cas d'Euphémie tuée par une ourse (τῇ δ' ἐκκαδεκάτῃ Εὐφημίαν ἔκτανε ἄρκτος)<sup>26</sup> ou d'Hermile et Stratonique, noyés dans le Danube (Ἐρμούλον ἡδ' ἐτάρον δεκάτῃ πνίξε τρίτῃ Ἰστρος).<sup>27</sup>

C'est justement cette attention scrupuleuse apportée aux détails qui se traduit par des formules expressives denses, habilement insérées dans l'espace restreint du monastique, comme pour l'endroit où fut tué Zacharie (πέμπτῃ Ζαχαρίαν δαπέδῳ σφάζαν παρὰ νηοῦ),<sup>28</sup> pour l'âge avancé atteint par Chariton (εἰκάδι ὁγδοάτῃ Χαρίτων θάνε γῆραϊ μακρῷ),<sup>29</sup> pour la singulière histoire de Denis, qui recueillit sa tête après la décapitation et la porta au sépulcre (τμηθεῖς, Διονύσιε, τρίτῃ κεφαλὴν θέες ἄρας)<sup>30</sup> et celle d'Irène, qui renaît après la décapitation (Εἰρήνῃ τμηθεῖσα ἀνέγρετο καὶ θάνε πέμπτῃ),<sup>31</sup> pour la crucifixion à tête en bas d'André (σταυρὸν κὰκ κεφαλῆς τριακοστῇ, Ἀνδρέα, ἔτλης)<sup>32</sup>, pour la mort qui arracha Thyse à la condamnation à être scié (πρίσιν ἀλύξας, Θύρσε, θάνες δεκάτῃ γε τετάρτῃ),<sup>33</sup> pour le martyr de Papas, lié à un arbre (δένδρου ἐπὶ κλώνοισι δέθης δεκάτῃ, Πάπα, ἔκτῃ).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>20</sup> S. Michel Archange, 8 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 72.

<sup>21</sup> Commémoration de S. Jean-Baptiste, 7 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 135.

<sup>22</sup> S. Zacharie moine, 24 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 212.

<sup>23</sup> S. Babyle, 4 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> 20.000 martyrs de Nicomède, 28 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> Saints Serge et Bacchus, 7 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 47.

<sup>26</sup> S. Euphémie, 16 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 23.

<sup>27</sup> Saints Hermile et Stratonique, 13 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 138.

<sup>28</sup> S. Zacharie, 5 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 13.

<sup>29</sup> S. Chariton, 28 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 38.

<sup>30</sup> S. Denys l'Aréopagite, 3 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 43.

<sup>31</sup> S. Irène, 5 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 267.

<sup>32</sup> S. André, 30 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 95.

<sup>33</sup> S. Thyse, 14 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 109.

<sup>34</sup> S. Papas, 16 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 203.

Le monostique, encore qu'il soit davantage orienté vers une énonciation très scandée d'un événement, peut parfois donner lieu à des procédés de communication plus complexes, qui transcendent le fait lui-même pour en arriver au niveau de l'interprétation ou de la dramatisation ou de la catéchèse. Ce n'est pas un hasard si cette exploration des limites expressives imposées par l'espace textuel limité se fait grâce aux variations syntaxiques réalisées par l'apparition du relatif,<sup>35</sup> des particules hypothétiques,<sup>36</sup> des conjonctions de subordination ayant une valeur causale,<sup>37</sup> lesquelles libèrent le monostique de la structure paratactique, en engendrant une hypotaxe, encore que sous forme embryonnaire.

Les impératifs contraignants du point de vue du contenu (le nom du saint, la date de la célébration, les circonstances de la mort) n'empêchent pas le recours à une transposition métaphorique, parfois suggérée par le nom du saint (ὀγδοάτη ὑπάλυσε βίου πέλαγος Πελαγίη,<sup>38</sup> εἰκάδι ἔκτη ἄλυπον, Ἄλύπιε, βήσω ἐς οἶκον,<sup>39</sup> ὀγδοάτη, Πατάπιε, χλόης πέδον ἀμφεπάτησας,<sup>40</sup> ὀγδοάτη δεκάτη τε Λέων ἠρεύξατο θυμόν),<sup>41</sup> parfois liée à la mort (εἰκάδι Γρηγόριον θανάτου νέφος εἶλε τετάρτη,<sup>42</sup> Γρηγόριον δεκάτη θανάτου κνέφας ἀμφεκάλυψεν,<sup>43</sup> τῇ τριτάτῃ δεσμοῖο βίοιο λύθη Συμεώνης).<sup>44</sup>

Un des instruments qui permettent de caractériser le saint ou sa biographie dans son ensemble ou, encore, un des éléments considérés comme fondamentaux pour l'édification des fidèles, encore qu'au sein de l'extrême concision du contexte structurel, est l'épithète, qui a été analysée par les traités de rhétorique – et ce n'est pas un hasard – comme un des expédients de la συντομία,<sup>45</sup> mais qui est en même temps un ingrédient typique de la trame lexicale épique, imposé par le mètre hexamétrique.

Christophore emprunte différentes voies: la réutilisation d'épithètes enracinées dans la tradition épique, le réemploi d'épithètes épiques, auxquelles est attribuée une nouvelle valeur sémantique, la création de néologismes. Parmi les premiers, ἐρισθενής,<sup>46</sup> qui dans

<sup>35</sup> Voir S. Daniel prophète, 17 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 112: ἐβδομάτῃ δεκάτῃ Δανιὴλ τάμον ὅς βλέπε μέλλον.

<sup>36</sup> Voir Dormition de la Vierge, 15 août: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 413: ζῇ αἰεὶ Θεομήτωρ, καὶν δεκάτῃ θάνε πέμπτῃ.

<sup>37</sup> Voir Paul confesseur, 6 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 70: οὐνεκα ὡμολόγει Παῦλος Θεὸν ἄγχεται ἕκτη.

<sup>38</sup> S. Pélagie, 8 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 48, où Follieri souligne le λογοπαίγνιον, en le qualifiant de découverte.

<sup>39</sup> S. Alype le stylite, 26 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 91.

<sup>40</sup> S. Patapios ermite, 8 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 103.

<sup>41</sup> S. Léon pape, 18 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 171.

<sup>42</sup> S. Grégoire, 24 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 89.

<sup>43</sup> S. Grégoire de Nyse, 10 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 136.

<sup>44</sup> S. Syméon, 3 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 160.

<sup>45</sup> Voir Demetrius, *De elocutione*, p. 92: Ἐξεί μέντοι τὸ σύνθετον ὄνομα ὁμοῦ καὶ ποικιλίαν τινὰ ἐκ τῆς συνθέσεως καὶ μέγεθος, καὶ ἅμα καὶ συντομίαν τινὰ.

<sup>46</sup> Saints 45 martyrs de Nicopoli, 10 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 353 (Follieri signale la présence de l'épithète épique) κτείνεν ἐρισθενέας δεκάτῃ πῦρ Νικοπολίτας.

Homère et Hésiode dépeint la divinité<sup>47</sup> et seulement à partir de l'épopée alexandrine les hommes ou les objets,<sup>48</sup> est lié, sans que ce soit un hasard, à la force avec laquelle les 45 martyrs de Nicopolis affrontèrent le feu. Ailleurs, *μεγαλήτωρ*, ajouté au nom d'Eumène évêque de Gortyne,<sup>49</sup> n'ajoute aucun élément hagiographique, mais a vraisemblablement pour fonction de renforcer l'allure épique du monastique, comme *περίπυστος* à propos du pape Martin,<sup>50</sup> ou *βωτιάνειρα* mis en relation, non pas avec une région spécifique, mais de manière générale avec γῆ.<sup>51</sup> On trouve en abondance des *iuncturae* épiques, telles que *ἄμφηκες ξίφος*,<sup>52</sup> *ταμεσίχρως χαλκός*<sup>53</sup> ou *θεσπιδᾶες πῦρ*,<sup>54</sup> parfaitement insérées dans le contexte hagiographique du martyr.

La transposition sémantique qui naît de la greffe de l'appareil lexical épique dans un contexte thématique si spécifiquement influencé par le Christianisme, laisse des traces: des épithètes comme *μογοστόκος* couvrent aussi bien des divinités païennes, comme Ilythie, que des saintes comme Sainte Anne,<sup>55</sup> grâce à l'identité du domaine concerné, dans ce cas précis l'aide aux femmes en couches.<sup>56</sup>

Il y a de nombreuses épithètes qui, tout en évoquant des tournures épiques, représentent une nouveauté totale, non seulement au niveau sémantique. La particularité de l'ascèse de Siméon le Stylite est explicitée par la seule épithète *ὑψιβάτης*,<sup>57</sup> celle du rôle de Théodose par *κοινοβιάρχης*,<sup>58</sup> et la diète qui caractérise l'ascèse de Cyriaque, est décrite par le néologisme *σκιλλοβόρος*.<sup>59</sup> La nudité qui caractérise l'ermitte Onuphre est évoquée

<sup>47</sup> Hom. *Il.* 13, 54; *Od.* 8, 289; Hes. *Th.* 4 etcetera.

<sup>48</sup> Apoll. Rh. 1, 41; *AP* 9, 808, 6.

<sup>49</sup> S. Eumène, 18 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 26: *ὀγδοάτη δεκάτη θάνεν Εὐμένιος μεγαλήτωρ*.

<sup>50</sup> S. Martin pape, 13 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 236: *ἀμφὶ τρίτην δεκάτην θάνε Μαρτίνος περίπυστος*.

<sup>51</sup> S. Métrophane, 4 juin: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 310 (Follieri souligne la saveur épique de l'épithète): *Μητροφάνης δὲ τετάρτη ἔδω χθόνα βωτιάνειραν*.

<sup>52</sup> S. Sophron, 10 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 196: *ἄμφηκες δεκάτη Κοδράτον ξίφος ἐγκατέπεφεν*; Hom. *Od.* 16, 80.

<sup>53</sup> S. Cristophe, 9 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 271: *Χριστοφόρον δ' ἐνάτη ταμεσίχρως ἔκτανε χαλκός*; Hom. *Il.* 4, 511.

<sup>54</sup> S. Olbien, 4 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 265: *Ὀλβιανὸν κατέπεφεν τετάρτη θεσπιδᾶες πῦρ*; Hom. *Il.* 12, 177.

<sup>55</sup> S. Anne, 25 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 378: *πέμπτη ἐξεβίωσε μογοστόκος εἰκάδι Ἄννα*.

<sup>56</sup> Voir Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 378, n. 216.

<sup>57</sup> S. Siméon le Stylite, 1 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 9: *ὑψιβάτης Συμεὼν Σεπτεμβρίου ἔκτανε πρώτη*. Voir S. Danile le Stylite, 11 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 106: *ἐνδεκάτη Δανιὴλ στυλοβάμων εὔρετο τέρμα*.

<sup>58</sup> S. Théodose, 11 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 137: *ἐνδεκάτη ὁλοὸν βίον λῖπε Κοινοβιάρχης*.

<sup>59</sup> S. Cyriaque anachorète, 29 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 39: *σκιλλοβόρος δ' ἐνάτη μύσεν εἰκάδι Κυριακός*.

par ἀχίτων,<sup>60</sup> la folie feinte de Siméon par ψευδαέφρων.<sup>61</sup> L'épithète peut même remplacer les noms propres, comme dans le cas de δωρώνυμοι, qui subsume et caractérise en même temps les trois saintes Ménodore, Métrodore et Nymphodore,<sup>62</sup> ou celui de βροντογόνος, qui fait – de manière conventionnelle – allusion au sens du nom propre hébraïque de Jean.<sup>63</sup> Dans d'autres cas, une épithète susceptible d'être introduite, du point de vue de la prosodie, dans l'hexamètre remonte non pas au contexte épique, mais bien au contexte spécifiquement chrétien, par exemple ἡπίθθυμος,<sup>64</sup> qui, dans les *Constitutions Apostoliques*<sup>65</sup> déjà, indique une vertu prescrite pour l'énéque.

L'empreinte épique est donc explicitement recherchée et presque exhibée pour mener à bien une opération commémorative du κλέος des nouveaux héros. En conséquence, la glorification et en même temps la définition, sommaire mais précise du point de vue hagiographique, des données éthiques et biographiques de chaque saint sont mises en relief par les caractères distinctifs de la langue épique, aux antipodes des usages linguistiques de l'époque de Christophore. De nombreuses particularités linguistiques homériques sont en effet reproduites, telles que l'absence d'augment,<sup>66</sup> la tmèse,<sup>67</sup> le recours au duel,<sup>68</sup> le datif pluriel éolique (-εσσι),<sup>69</sup> ainsi que la présence de mots ou de connexions avec une connotation précise dans le contexte épique.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>60</sup> S. Onuphre, 12 juin: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 319: δωδεκάτη ἀχίτωνα Ὀνούφριον ἐκ βίου ἤραν.

<sup>61</sup> S. Siméon, 21 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 371: ψευδαέφρων περίφρων Συμεὼν θάνεν εἰκάδι πρώτῃ.

<sup>62</sup> Saintes Ménodore, Métrodore, Nymphodore, 10 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 18: θεινόμενοι δεκάτη δωρώνυμοι ἔκθανον αἱ τρεῖς.

<sup>63</sup> S. Jean l'Évangéliste, 8 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 269: ὀγδοάτῃ τελέουσι ῥοδισμόν βροντογόνοιο.

<sup>64</sup> S. Stéphane, 13 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 359: ἀμφὶ τρίτην δεκάτην Στεφάνου μόρος ἡπισθύμου. Ici, comme dans d'autres monastiques (S. Théodore, 19 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 246: ἀμφ' ἐνάτην δεκάτην Θεοδώρῳ σταυρὸς ἀεθλος), la συντομία se réalise également à travers l'aphérèse du verbe.

<sup>65</sup> *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, éd. B.M. Metzger, *Les constitutions apostoliques (Sources chrétiennes 320, 329, 336, 3 vols, Paris, 1985–1987)*, vol. 2, ch. 57, 1.

<sup>66</sup> S. Mammès, 2 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 10: δευτερὴν χολάδες Μάμαντος χύντο τριαινῇ; S. Babyle, 4 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 12: πέφνε; S. Procope, 28 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 182: φαάνθη.

<sup>67</sup> S. Isidore Pelusiotte, 4 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 160: ἐν ... ἔθεντο; S. Polycarpe, 23 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 175: κατὰ ... ἔκαυσεν; S. Tite, 2 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 224: ἀπὸ ... ἦγον.

<sup>68</sup> SS. Côme et Damien, 1 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 66: ἀκέστορε φῶτε; Saintes Théodule et Agatopode, 4 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 225: ἐδύτην; S. Théodore Siceote, 22 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 250: ὄσσε.

<sup>69</sup> S. Basse, 21 août: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 421: τεκέεσσι.

<sup>70</sup> Saintes Zénaïde et Philonille, 11 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 50: κυδρῇ; S. Luc l'Évangéliste, 18 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 56: ἔμμορε; S. Thérénce, 10 avril: Follieri,



A cette réutilisation ostentatoire du mètre, du lexique et des phénomènes morphologiques caractéristiques de l'épopée correspond, dans un jeu de dissonances sophistiquées, l'exploration de groupes et de *iuncturae* avec des valeurs sémantiques qui ne sont pas coutumières de l'épique, mais qui sont parfaitement en harmonie avec l'univers symbolique et métaphorique du christianisme. Le nombre des cas est vaste et inclut des connexions connues, utilisées dans un sens euphémique, comme μετέβη,<sup>71</sup> ὤχετο γαίης,<sup>72</sup> ἐνθεν ἀειραν,<sup>73</sup> ἐξαναλύων,<sup>74</sup> βῆ ... ἐνθεν,<sup>75</sup> aussi bien que des *iuncturae* dont on ne trouve pas trace dans la tradition épique, mais qui présentent des mots avec une connotation nettement épique, tels que θυμός<sup>76</sup> et ἦτορ,<sup>77</sup> parfois davantage qualifiés par des épithètes d'ascendance homérique.<sup>78</sup> On lit également des métaphores étroitement liées à des thèmes et à des valeurs chrétiennes telles que ἄλυπον ... εἰς οἶκον,<sup>79</sup> ποτὶ ἄμβροτον οὐδαν,<sup>80</sup> φθινύθοντος ἀπῆρε βίου,<sup>81</sup> ποιμένα ἐς μέγαν.<sup>82</sup>

Le choix, apparemment paradoxal, d'utiliser un mètre lié à une tradition narrative pour concentrer dans l'espace exigu d'un seul vers l'énonciation d'un ensemble de données indispensables du point de vue hagiographique, est mené à bien par Christophore. Il ne s'éloigne pas des éléments caractéristiques de la diction épique, mais il les exploite dans un complexe dialectique de réutilisation et de changement sémantique. L'exigüité de l'espace textuel n'interdit ni la caractérisation du saint ni l'énonciation des détails, ni même, au niveau expressif, la complexité syntaxique ou le recours aux transpositions métaphoriques.

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*I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 234: ἀσπάραγον; S. Tycon, 16 juin: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 322: κατερύκακε; S. Sisoe, 6 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 346: μέγας μεγαλωστί.

<sup>71</sup> Décès de S. Jean l'Évangéliste, 26 septembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 36.

<sup>72</sup> S. Aberce, 22 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 58; S. Jason, 28 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 258: ἀπεβήσατο γαίης.

<sup>73</sup> S. Antoine, 17 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 142; S. Pacôme, 15 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 278; Voir aussi Greg. Naz. *Anth. Pal.* 8, 28, 4: ἐνθεν ἀέρθη, 48, 3: ἐνθεν ἀέρθην, 55, 3: ἐνθεν ἀερθή, 61, 1: ἐνθεν ἀέρθη.

<sup>74</sup> S. Jean Climaque, 30 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 220.

<sup>75</sup> S. Samuel, 20 août: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 420.

<sup>76</sup> S. Sylvestre, 2 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 130: θυμὸν ἀποπνέει; S. Ephrem, 28 janvier: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 155: θυμὸν ἀπηύρων; S. Léon, 18 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 171: ἡρεύξατο; S. Lampade, 5 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 345: μελιθδεά θυμὸν ἀφῆκεν.

<sup>77</sup> S. Sophonie, 3 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 99: ἦτορ ἀφῆκεν.

<sup>78</sup> Voir S. Lampade 5 juillet: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 345: μελιθδεά θυμόν.

<sup>79</sup> S. Alype, 26 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 91.

<sup>80</sup> S. Ambroise, 7 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 103.

<sup>81</sup> S. Théophane, 12 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 197.

<sup>82</sup> S. Pemen, 27 août: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 430.



## Les distiques iambiques

Le *Calendrier* iambique, qui a fourni la base pour la composition du *Calendrier* hexamétrique, est le plus étendu et le plus complet, car il dédie un distique à chaque saint ou groupe de saints qui sont célébrés le même jour dans la synaxe. Pour ce deuxième calendrier, c'est surtout la tradition épigrammatique qui offre une série d'exemples utilisables, notamment à partir du moment où le rythme iambique remplace le distique élégiaque comme mètre de base, avec Georges de Pisidie.<sup>83</sup> C'est justement Georges qui inclut dans le bref espace du distique la commémoration de fêtes, vraisemblablement liée à leur représentation,<sup>84</sup> dans le rapport traditionnel entre représentations artistique et verbale,<sup>85</sup> mais il explore également la célébration de saints. Les stratégies expressives qui y sont utilisées sont multiples: on peut repérer une structure syntaxique appositive, centrée sur une définition du sujet de l'épigramme,<sup>86</sup> ou bien une attention particulière à la cohérence de l'événement hagiographique, qui s'exprime par la connexion entre participe et verbe principal,<sup>87</sup> ou encore la prépondérance de l'aspect narratif.<sup>88</sup>

Notamment sur la base du précédent créé par Georges,<sup>89</sup> Christophore, confronté à l'exigüité de l'espace textuel disponible, n'essaye pas d'explorer la voie de la variété syntaxique et lexicale,<sup>90</sup> de l'expansion du rythme narratif, mais recherche une sorte de condensation expressive gravitant sur certains noyaux sémantiques, qui sont en mesure

<sup>83</sup> Quant aux conséquences, notamment structurelles, du changement de rythme, voir Marc Lauxtermann, 'The Velocity of Pure Iambus. Byzantine Observations on the Metre and Rhythm of the Dodecasyllable', *JÖB*, 48 (1988): pp. 25–28; Tartaglia, 'Sugli epigrammi', pp. 816–817 et pp. 819–820. Sur le dodécasyllabe de Georges, voir Roberto Romano, 'Teoria e prassi della versificazione. Il dodecasyllabo nei Panegirici di Giorgio di Pisidia', *BZ*, 78 (1985): pp. 1–22.

<sup>84</sup> Tartaglia, 'Sugli epigrammi', pp. 813–815.

<sup>85</sup> Sur le rapport entre épigramme et objets artistiques, voir Wolfram Hörandner, 'Randbemerkungen zum Thema Epigramme und Kunstwerke', dans Cordula Schulz et Georgios Makris (éd.), *Polypheuros Nous. Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* (Munich/Leipzig, 2000), pp. 69–82.

<sup>86</sup> Tartaglia, 'Sugli epigrammi', pp. 815–816.

<sup>87</sup> Voir Georgios Pisides, *Epigrammata*, éd. L. Tartaglia, *Carmi di Giorgio di Pisidia* (Turin, 1998), *Epigr.* 57: ἐχούσα Παύλου τοῦς ἔρωτας τῶν λόγων / ἡ Θέκλα Χριστοῦ τοῖς νόμοις μνηστεύεται, 61: ἡ παγγέραςτος ἐβδόμας τῶν μαρτύρων / νόμῳ θανοῦσα τὴν χάριν συνεισφέρει, 65: σὺ χρυσολέκτων εὐπορήσας ὀργάνων / εἰς γῆν κατασπᾶς τὰς φιλαργύρας φρένας, 77: σαφῶς ἀνοιξας τῶν λογισμῶν τὸ στόμα / εἰλκυσας ἔνδον πνεύματος θεοῦ χάριν.

<sup>88</sup> Voir Pisides, *Epigr.* 59: κέκμηκε ταῖς σαῖς ῥωστικαῖς χειουργίαις / ἡ σηπεδὼν θανοῦσα, μάρτυς τῆς πλάνης.

<sup>89</sup> À propos du succès complexe de Georges dans les poètes byzantins, voir l'apport récent de Anna Maria Taragna, 'Sulla fortuna di Giorgio di Pisidia in Michele Psello. Il caso del carne In Christi resurrectionem', dans Martin Hinterberger et Elisabeth Schiffer (éd.), *Byzantinische Sprachkunst. Studien zur byzantinischen Literatur gewidmet Wolfram Hörandner zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin/New York, 2007), pp. 308–329.

<sup>90</sup> Sur la stratégie de composition analogue de Georges, voir Tartaglia, 'Sugli epigrammi', p. 819.

de rendre perceptible aussi bien la dimension hagiographique que la catéchèse qui s'appuie sur celle-ci.

Une première tendance qui se dégage de la structuration syntaxique des distiques présente un diptyque, constitué d'une proposition principale et d'un participe. La structure qui est de loin la plus fréquente est celle dans laquelle le participe précède, étant donné que d'abord une situation est décrite ou une donnée de fait est établie, sur la base de laquelle se développe l'action principale. L'analyse d'un distique comme celui qui est dédié à Centurion<sup>91</sup> ('Ο Κεντυρίων πῦρ πόθου θείου πνέων, / ψυχὴν προθύμως εἰς τὸ πῦρ ἀποπνέει) permet d'identifier l'échafaudage narratif et idéologique de base du *Calendrier* iambique: Christophore entend mettre en évidence l'adéquation et la cohérence existant entre la spécificité éthique ou biographique du saint et les modalités de sa fin, que la poésie est destinée à célébrer. Cette adéquation, sur les variantes de laquelle portera plus précisément l'analyse, est également le pivot de la structure, beaucoup plus rare, dans laquelle la principale précède, comme dans le distique qui a comme acteur central Nicandre<sup>92</sup> (Νικανδρὸν ἐκδέρουσιν, ὥσπερ ἄρνιον, / χεῖρας βαλόντες οἱ μάγειροι τῆς πλάνης). La cohérence se concentre sur les modalités de la mort ou sur l'attitude à son égard, ou, dans ce texte, plus précisément sur le rapport qui se crée entre le martyr et ses bourreaux, notamment grâce à une similitude et à une métaphore suivie.<sup>93</sup>

Christophore, qui vise à retrouver le fil d'un dessein précis qui peut être recherché dans l'histoire terrestre du saint et dans le moment de son décès, développe la symétrie du tissu expressif dans diverses directions. Certains distiques mettent cette symétrie en évidence grâce à l'anaphore à la fin des vers: dans le distique qui commémore la crucifixion d'un père et d'un fils<sup>94</sup> (πατὴρ σὺν υἱῷ σταυρικὸν πάσχει πάθος / ὑπὲρ Πατρός τοῦ δόντος Υἱὸν εἰς πάθος), la gamme lexicale se concentre sur trois mots clés qui reviennent dans chaque vers (πατὴρ, υἱός, πάθος). Dans l'apparente dialectique entre la mort commune du père et du fils humains et la livraison du Fils à la passion par la volonté du Père céleste, s'inscrit tout le sens de la catéchèse qui retrouve une cohérence sous l'apparence de l'asymétrie. Dans le distique qui a pour protagoniste Siméon Stylite le Jeune, l'anaphore qui conclut les deux vers n'est qu'un des facteurs qui lient tous les mots en un rapport étroit de correspondance ou d'opposition:<sup>95</sup> les deux adverbes opposés (πρὶν-νῦν) et les temps du verbe lui-même (ῥκει-οἰκεῖ) tracent un parcours cohérent, même en ce qui concerne la progression temporelle, tendant à une αὔξησις soulignée par le couple antithétique γῆς-πόλου et par la κλίμαξ entre θαυμαστόν et πανθαύμαστον. Ou bien, encore, l'anaphore

<sup>91</sup> 4 septembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας*, éd. S. Eustratiades (Athènes, 1960), p. 250.

<sup>92</sup> 15 mars: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 351.

<sup>93</sup> Voir également Théotime, 4 septembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 178: Θεότιμος τέθνηκε σὺν Θεοδούλῳ / τιμὴν σὺν αὐτῷ δουλικὴν δοὺς Κυρίῳ; Sozonte, 7 septembre, Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 16: ἀντίτεχε Σώζων σώματος πρὸς αἰκίας, / πρὸς τὸν μόνον σῶζοντα τὴν ψυχὴν βλέπων.

<sup>94</sup> 13 février: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 311. Voir Paul Maas, 'Echoverse in byzantinischen Epitaphien', *BZ*, 13 (1904): p. 161.

<sup>95</sup> 24 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 293: θαυμαστόν ῥκει πρὶν Συμεὼν γῆς ὄρος, / πόλου δὲ πανθαύμαστον οἰκεῖ νῦν ὄρος. Voir Pisides, *Epigr.* 31, 1 –2: διὰ ξύλου / διὰ ξύλου.

peut insister sur le début des deux vers, parfois suggérée par le λογοπαίγνιον sur le nom du saint, comme dans le distique en hommage à Therme.<sup>96</sup>

La cohérence des desseins divins est célébrée par l'apparition d'une double anaphore, au début et à la fin des deux vers, déclinée dans le sens aussi bien de la correspondance parfaite que de l'αὐξήσις. Dans le distique centré sur l'homonymie entre le soldat Longin le Centurion et l'ascète Longin, la paronomase d' ἀθλητὴν et ἀσκητὴν s'ajoute aux doubles anaphores de ἔχεις et de μέγαν,<sup>97</sup> tandis que l'histoire de Thomas<sup>98</sup> s'inscrit dans la catéchèse de la récompense incommensurable obtenue pour le renoncement à ce qu'on peut mesurer: ἐκλιπὼν versus εὗρεν, μετρομένην versus οὐ μετρομένην.

Le distique dans son ensemble peut être contenu au sein de l'anaphore d'un même mot qui apparaît au début du premier vers et à la fin du second,<sup>99</sup> de manière à fournir une sorte de code explicite pour l'édification du fidèle: la commémoration du patriarche Germain<sup>100</sup> s'inscrit dans le cadre de la joie, grâce à l'anaphore de χαίρων. Un résultat expressif assez similaire est obtenu par des distiques qui forment non pas une vraie anaphore mais une sorte d'assonance ou même de rime.<sup>101</sup> Dans la composition dédiée à Triphyle, la connexion paronomastique 'Υψίστου πέλας – 'Υψίστου σέλας est renforcée par le λογοπαίγνιον jouant sur le rapport entre le nom du saint et l'épithète τριπρόσωπον.<sup>102</sup>

Les effets rythmiques et phonétiques obtenus grâce à la réutilisation, dans des contextes métriques différents, de mots caractérisés par une paronomase visent à exprimer un noyau conceptuel de très grande importance, notamment la connexion entre différents moments de l'histoire du salut. Un bon exemple est le distique consacré à la commémoration de l'apparition du signe de la croix à Constantin:<sup>103</sup> l'anaphore de ἡγίασθη et la paronomase entre παγέντος et φανέντος entendent exprimer la continuité entre la crucifixion et l'apparition de la Croix. Les antithèses entre les phases diachroniques (πάλαι et νῦν) et les sujets de la sanctification (γῆ et πόλος) soulignent

<sup>96</sup> 5 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 202: θέρμην ἔρωτος ἐνθέου Θέρμος φέρων, / θέρμην πυρὸς φλέγοντος ὡς ψῦζιν κρίνει. Le ms. *Palat. gr.* 383 a, au lieu de κρίνει, la λερὸν φέρει, en proposant une anaphore finale également. Voir Pisides, *Epigr.* 56, 1–2: τῶν ἀγγέλων / τῶν ἀγγέλων.

<sup>97</sup> 17 novembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 276: ἔχεις ἀθλητὴν, Χριστέ, Λογγῖνον μέγαν, / ἔχεις δὲ καὶ Λογγῖνον ἀσκητὴν μέγαν; Pisides, *Epigr.* 56, 1–2: τῶν ἀγγέλων ... ἐν βίῳ / τῶν ἀγγέλων ... τὸν βίον.

<sup>98</sup> 15 novembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 204: ζῶν ὁ Θωμᾶς ἐκλιπὼν μετρομένην / ζῶν πρεπόντως εὗρεν οὐ μετρομένην; Pisides, *Epigr.* 47, 1–2: ὁ μὴ νοσῶν εἰσελθε, καὶ λύεις νόσον. / ὁ μὴ νοσῶν πάρελθε, μὴ λάβῃς νόσον.

<sup>99</sup> De ce point de vue également, Christophore poursuit les stratégies de composition et de rythme explorées par Georges de Pisidie: Tartaglia, 'Sugli epigrammi', pp. 816–817.

<sup>100</sup> 12 mai: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 91: χαίρων ἀφείς γῆν Γερμανὸς καὶ τὸν θρόνον / γῆς δημιουργοῦ τὸν θρόνον βλέπει χαίρων.

<sup>101</sup> Pisides, *Epigr.* 1, 1–2: σὺ θαλπικὴ πέφυκας ἀγνείας πτέρυξ / καὶ τημητικός, προφήτα, λαγνείας πέλυξ, 75, 1–2: τῶν δογμάτων / τῶν αἱμάτων.

<sup>102</sup> 12 juin: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 452: ἔστηκε Τριφύλλιος ὑψίστου πέλας, / ὁρῶν τὸ τριπρόσωπον ὑψίστου σέλας.

<sup>103</sup> 7 mai: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 430: σταυροῦ παγέντος ἡγίασθη γῆ πάλαι / καὶ νῦν φανέντος ἡγίασθη καὶ πόλος.

cette continuité. En plus, le distique présente une *αὔξισις* suggérée par la présence de la conjonction intensive *καί*.<sup>104</sup>

Une opération analogue, menée toutefois sur la donnée biographique d'un seul saint, peut être observée dans la commémoration d'Euplus: la paronomase et l'assonance, dont l'effet est augmenté par une présence dans les mêmes contextes métriques, sont triplées dans la dialectique entre *στολῆς-τομῆς*, *σεπτός-στερρός*, *λευῖτης-ὀπλίτης*.<sup>105</sup> L'intensité catéchétique et la condensation expressive sont travaillées dans un tissu de composition qui se présente apparemment des plus simples.

Une recherche stylistique particulièrement fréquente se manifeste dans l'ampleur de la gamme métaphorique, instrument privilégié d'une recherche d'une cohérence au sein de l'histoire de chaque saint. Cette cohérence semble former la base conceptuelle de la catéchèse poursuivie par le *Calendrier*. Dans certains distiques, il est évident que le point de départ de la transposition métaphorique est offert par le nom propre lui-même: Pélagie parvient ainsi à un accostage qui est qualifié de *ὄρμον οὐρανοῦ*,<sup>106</sup> l'étymologie du nom Maron suggère une antithèse complexe entre la flétrissure corporelle (*μαρανθεῖς*) et la floraison céleste (*θάλλει*), organisée avec une plénitude de raccords analogiques en termes de transplantation (*μετεμφυτευθεῖς*) dans le jardin de l'Éden.<sup>107</sup> Sur le rapport entre le nom Alone<sup>108</sup> et la dénomination grecque de l'aire (*ἄλων*) est élaborée une métaphore complexe qui fait allusion à Dieu en tant que cultivateur d'âmes (*ψυχῶν γεωργόν*) et aux vertus entassées (*καλῶν θημωνίαν*).<sup>109</sup>

Un autre point de départ fécond se trouve dans les modalités du martyre: le four suggère le rapport avec le creuset dans lequel les martyrs Marcel et Antoine resplendent;<sup>110</sup> l'empalement avec des broches de Callinice et d'Aculine permet de préparer une table insolite pour Satan;<sup>111</sup> la grâce divine permet d'assimiler Théodote<sup>112</sup> à la qualité de l'épée (*πρὸς ξίφος τεθηγμένην*), dans une sorte d'échange de rôles entre

<sup>104</sup> Il faut remarquer aussi le paronomase à la fin du vers entre *πάλα* et *πόλος*.

<sup>105</sup> 11 août: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 405: ἐκ τῆς στολῆς μὲν σεπτὸς Εὐπλος λευῖτης, / ἐκ τῆς τομῆς δὲ στερρὸς ὄντως ὀπλίτης.

<sup>106</sup> 8 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 47: αἵσχος πλυθεῖσα καὶ λιποῦσα γῆς σάλον / πρὸς ὄρμον ἦκει οὐρανοῦ Πελαγία.

<sup>107</sup> 14 février: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 327: λήσει μαρανθεῖς σαρκίου θάλλει Μάρων / μετεμφυτευθεῖς τῆς Ἐδέμ τῷ χωρίῳ.

<sup>108</sup> 4 juin: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 30: ψυχῶν γεωργὸν Ἀλώνιος ἡδύνει / ψυχῆς ἄλωνι θεῖς καλῶν θημωνίαν.

<sup>109</sup> Métaphore sur le nom d'un martyr et *λογοπαίγνιον* sur celui d'un autre martyr, avec les noms dans une position de chiasme par rapport à leurs explications dans la commémoration de Caralampe et Pantaléon, 17 septembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 473: χαίρων ὑπῆρχε πρὸς σφαγὴν Χαραλάμπης / καὶ Παντολέων πρὸς μάχαιραν ἦν λέων.

<sup>110</sup> 1 mars: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 299: χώνη τις ἡ κάμινος ἀθληταῖς δύο / οἱ χρυσίου λάμπουσιν ἐν ταύτῃ πλέον.

<sup>111</sup> 9 mai: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 59: ἔχει τράπεζαν Σατανᾶς πάλιν νέαν. / γύναια σουβλιζοῦσιν οἱ πλάνοι δύο.

<sup>112</sup> 17 septembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 176: τὴν Θεοδότην πρὸς ξίφος τεθηγμένην / ποιεῖ πρόθυμον ἡ Θεόσδοτος χάρις.

la victime et l'instrument du martyr, dont la nature en même temps énigmatique et surprenante exige une glose explicative (πρόθυμον); Galicot,<sup>113</sup> mordu par les bêtes féroces, vainc le diable par le martyr: c'est-à-dire, dans la transposition métaphorique, rompt les dents du θῆρ νοητός. La triple cohérence métaphorique qui est constituée par le type de mort affronté par le martyr, par le danger auquel la mort permet de fuir, et enfin par le talion de la victime, qui déverse sur le persécuteur la violence qu'elle subit, connaît un triomphe de virtuosité dans le distique dédié à la vierge Pélagie.<sup>114</sup> Celle-ci se jette dans un ravin (κρημνῶ) en évitant le grand abîme, celui du déshonneur (φυγοῦσα κρημνὸν αἰσχύνης μέγαν) et en entraînant en même temps la ruine (c'est-à-dire la chute) du diable (κρημνεί τὸν ἐχθρόν). Ce distique montre une architecture complexe, qui s'appuie sur la réutilisation de la même racine, dans un entrelacement entre polyptote et figure étymologique.

Ou bien encore, c'est le métier pratiqué durant la vie du saint qui fournit le cadre sur lequel on tresse la trame métaphorique: la décapitation du nocher Théoctiste<sup>115</sup> est transposée dans la navigation du navire de l'âme vers le ciel (ψυχῆς ἰθύνει τὸ σκάφος πρὸς τὸν πόλον); celle du chanteur Menas<sup>116</sup> provoque par contraste le silence de l'impiété à laquelle est attribuée une bouche chanteuse, dans le rapport analogique-antinomique entre martyr et bourreau/démon analysé par Christophore (φίμοι κελαδοῦν δυσσεβείας τὸ στόμα); celle, enfin, du mage Athanase<sup>117</sup> implique, sous la forme d'un παράδοξον apparent, la détermination du médicament qui en guérira l'âme malade (ψυχῆς νοσοῦσης εὖρε φάρμακον ξένον). Le métier de notaire des martyrs Marcien et Martyre tuées par l'épée (Χριστοῦ καλάμους τοὺς Νοταρίους νόει) est la base de leur assimilation métaphorique à des plumes de Christ,<sup>118</sup> trempées dans le sang, selon l'expression scripturale.<sup>119</sup> Ce distique met clairement en évidence la stratégie de composition et en même temps d'exégèse qui est constamment utilisée par Christophore: procéder à une signalisation et, en même temps, à une explication, parfois apologetique, de la métaphore, ce qui s'impose en raison de la densité du contexte expressif et, parfois, de la hardiesse de la transposition.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>113</sup> 4 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 87: δηχθεὶς ὁδοῦσι Κάλικος τῶν θηρίων / θηρὸς νοητοῦ τοὺς ὀδόντας συντρίβει.

<sup>114</sup> 8 octobre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 384: κρημνῶ φυγοῦσα κρημνὸν αἰσχύνης μέγαν / κρημνεί τὸν ἐχθρόν εὐφυνῶς Πελαγία.

<sup>115</sup> 6 septembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 190.

<sup>116</sup> 10 décembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 104: τηθηθεὶς ὁ Μηνάς, κἂν κελαδεῖν οὐκ ἔχη, / φίμοι κελαδοῦν δυσσεβείας τὸ στόμα.

<sup>117</sup> 23 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 14: Ἀθανάσιος φαρμακὸς τομὴν κάρας / ψυχῆς νοσοῦσης εὖρε φάρμακον ξένον.

<sup>118</sup> 25 octobre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 59: Θεοῦ καλάμους τοὺς Νοταρίους νόει, / εἰς αἷμα τὸ σφῶν ἐκ ξίφους βεβαμμένους.

<sup>119</sup> *Ap. Io.* 19, 13.

<sup>120</sup> Voir Lia Raffaella Cresci, 'Esegesi nel testo poetico. Il caso del *Calendario giambico* di Cristoforo Mitileneo', *Rendiconti dell'Accademia di Archeologia di Lettere e Belle Arti*, 70 (2001): pp. 262–265.

La forme la plus simple et habituelle est le génitif de spécification, apposé au terme sur lequel s'appuie la métaphore: dans la connexion ἐκ τοῦ ῥύπου σμηχθεῖσα τῆς ἄσωτίας, le génitif τῆς ἄσωτίας fournit la clé permettant de résoudre l'énigme de ce qu'est la saleté dont Thaïs<sup>121</sup> se libère pour se rapprocher de Dieu. Dans de nombreux passages, la présence de l'épithète νοητός fournit à la fois la marque de la métaphore et un indice pour la déchiffrer. C'est ainsi que Flavien,<sup>122</sup> dans sa course vers Dieu, ne heurte pas des pieds des obstacles métaphoriques (σκάλοις νοητοῖς οὐχὶ προσκόψας πόδας), la bravoure<sup>123</sup> de Gennadius<sup>124</sup> dans le gymnase métaphorique de la vie lui vaut la couronne de la victoire au ciel (νοητὴν πρὸς παλαίστραν), les ailes avec lesquelles Nicète, échappé à la vie, vole dans le ciel sont qualifiées comme métaphoriques (πτεροῖς νοητοῖς), ce qui s'ajoute à une association explicite entre le saint et un oiseau.<sup>125</sup>

Une stratégie efficace consiste en l'introduction d'une glose après le terme métaphorique dont elle fournit l'exégèse: la grande tour<sup>126</sup> (c'est-à-dire les cinq martyrs de Nicomède) s'écroule, ébranlée par un tremblement de terre, c'est-à-dire par l'épée du bourreau (σεισμῷ κλονισθὲν τῷ ξίφει τοῦ δημίου); l'analogie entre le corps du martyr Léonce<sup>127</sup> et l'enclume, explicitement énoncée, correspond à une équivalence tout aussi explicite entre les marteaux et les tourments (πρὸς σφύρας, τὰς αἰκίας). Le processus de transposition analogique devient lui-même l'objet d'une évaluation explicite par le poète dans le distique sur Glycère:<sup>128</sup> le rapprochement entre la gorge du paysan, décapité, et la terre, et celui qui s'ensuit entre le soc et l'épée, est présenté par Christophore lui-même comme opportun, ce qui confirme le rôle que le rapprochement analogique (dans la métaphore et dans la similitude) joue dans la condensation expressive du *Calendrier* iambique et de la conscience critique de la fonction catéchétique qu'il remplit.

La cadence binaire du distique est souvent exploitée au profit de l'impact déjà considérable de la métaphore. On observe, une fois de plus, la présence d'une sorte de diptyque. Dans certains distiques, l'énoncé glisse de la donnée réelle vers la

<sup>121</sup> 12 novembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 445: ἐκ τοῦ ῥύπου σμηχθεῖσα τῆς ἄσωτίας, / φαιδρὰ πρόσεισι τῷ Θεῷ, Ταῖσία.

<sup>122</sup> 8 octobre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 467: σκάλοις νοητοῖς οὐχὶ προσκόψας πόδας / ὁ Φλαβιανὸς μέχρι σοῦ, Θεέ, τρέχει.

<sup>123</sup> Avec λογοπαίγνιον entre γεννάδας et le nom du saint.

<sup>124</sup> 17 novembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 89: ὁ Γεννάδιος εὗρε τὴν Ἐδὲμ στέφος / φανεῖς νοητὴν πρὸς παλαίστραν γεννάδας.

<sup>125</sup> 3 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 225: ῥυσθεὶς βίου Νικήτας ὡς στρουθὸς πάγχυς / πτεροῖς νοητοῖς ἵπταται πρὸς τὸν πόλον.

<sup>126</sup> 16 juin: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 313: πίπτει συναύλων πενταπύργιον μέγα, / σεισμῷ κλονισθὲν τῷ ξίφει τοῦ δημίου.

<sup>127</sup> 18 juin: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 323: ἄκμων τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Λεοντίου τάχα, / ἄκμων σιδηροῦς πρὸς σφύρας, τὰς αἰκίας.

<sup>128</sup> 23 avril: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 252: λαμὸν σὸν ὡς γῆν, ὡς ὕνιν δὲ τὴν σπάθην, / γεωργὲ Γλυκέριε, προσφόρως κρίνω.

réélaboration métaphorique: la forme du martyr affrontée par Paul,<sup>129</sup> l'étranglement, se transforme en une capacité thérapeutique se concentrant dans les maladies de la gorge, métaphoriquement qualifiées d'étranglement. La présence du même mot (*ἀγχόνην*) à la fin des deux vers rythme la continuité des intentions, se traduisant par le passage de la donnée concrète à sa transposition, dans le distique dédié à Fusik.<sup>130</sup> Le martyr en personne témoigne directement de l'assimilation de sa peau à une tunique tissée par la navette de Satan: le courage démontré pour affronter le martyr trouve dans l'énonciation métaphorique une motivation, dont l'impact catéchétique, en plus de l'impact émotif, est immédiatement perceptible. Le courage de la martyre Drosis,<sup>131</sup> jetée dans un four destiné au travail de l'or, est proclamé dans des termes qui s'alignent avec l'instrument du martyr: Drosis, en effet, ne révélera dans la fonte la présence d'aucun déchet qui révélerait une mauvaise frappe.

Dans d'autres distiques, le pendule de la structure de la composition peut se déplacer de la formulation métaphorique pour en arriver à la donnée réelle: la parfaite consécution entre la foi de Leonidas<sup>132</sup> et l'acceptation du martyr se mesure par l'allure formelle du passage, de la métaphore de l'amour ardent pour Dieu à la donnée historique de la mort dans le feu.<sup>133</sup> S'appuyant sur l'élément commun de l'eau, Christophore souligne la cohérence paradoxale entre la fuite de la tromperie, dont l'ampleur et la puissance suggèrent l'assimilation avec la mer, et le choix de Claude<sup>134</sup> de se laisser jeter à la mer par les fervents de la tromperie. La gorge du martyr Marcien<sup>135</sup> peut être métaphoriquement transposée en un écrin, car il contenait le poignard par lequel il fut égorgé.

L'ampleur et la complexité du recours à la métaphore, y compris les formules qui combinent la transposition avec la donnée réelle et qui engendrent ainsi une sorte de glose, se présentent comme un des instruments privilégiés pour exprimer, de manière

<sup>129</sup> 6 novembre: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 70: τὴν εἰς φάρυγγα Παῦλος αὐχῶν ἀγχόνην / λυεῖ φάρυγγι ρευμάτων τὴν ἀγχόνην.

<sup>130</sup> 17 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 438: τὸ δέρμα, Φουσίκ, ἐκδεδάρθω μοι, λέγει, / χιτῶν ὕφανθεις τοῦ Σατανᾶ τῇ κρόκη.

<sup>131</sup> 28 juillet: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 121: χρυσοῦ Δροσίς βληθείσα χωνευτηρίῳ, / οὐχ εὐρέθη κιβδηλὸς ἢ μικτὴ ῥύπων.

<sup>132</sup> 2 septembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 275: τοῦ πρὸς Θεόν σε φλόξ πόθου, Λεωνίδη, / ἔπειθε ῥᾶστα καὶ φλογὸς φέρειν βίαν.

<sup>133</sup> Le passage avec le feu est fréquent: S. Julienne, 1 novembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 262: τῷ πρὸς σε φίλτρῳ, Σῶτερ, ἐκκεκαυμένη, / Ἰουλιανὴ καῦσιν ἐκ πυρὸς φέρει; S. Therme, 5 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 202: θέρμην ἔρωτος ἐνθέου Θέρμος φέρων, / θέρμην πυρὸς φλέγοντος ὡς ψῦξιν κρίνει; S. Pierre, 12 janvier: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 202: ἀπανθρακωθεὶς καρδίαν θείῳ πόθῳ / ἐπ' ἀνθράκων ἥδιστα Πέτρος ἐκπνέει; S. Néarche, 22 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 347: τοῦ πρὸς σε, Σῶτερ, ἐμπύρου θείου πόθου, / Νέαρχος εἶπεν, οὐδὲ πῦρ με χωρίσει.

<sup>134</sup> 19 mars: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 205: φυγῶν θάλασσαν Κλαύδιος τὴν τῆς πλάνης / ἔνδον θαλάσσης βάλλεται παρὰ πλάνων.

<sup>135</sup> 11 juillet: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 301: ὕπῃρξε θήκη, Μαρκιανέ, σὸς φάρυγξ / χωροῦσα τὴν μάχαιραν, ἣν κατεκρίθης.



édifiante, le rapport dialectique entre la mort (ou la conduite durant la vie) du saint et les raisons divines.

L'exigüité de l'espace textuel n'interdit pas la présence marquée d'une forme catéchétique avec un impact considérable: le discours direct, où le saint lui-même énonce de manière vigoureuse le sens de son propre témoignage. Les douze soldats martyrisés, par exemple, disent être passés, grâce à l'épée, au service du véritable empereur.<sup>136</sup> Comme dans la plupart des cas analogues, c'est la présence d'un *verbum dicendi* qui signale de manière manifeste le discours direct et l'identité de celui qui le prononce. Mais le savoir-faire dans la composition parvient à organiser des structures plus complexes, comme celles qui ne contiennent pas la présence du *verbum dicendi*<sup>137</sup> mais se réalisent uniquement sur le plan de la λέξις mimétique, ou celles qui rythment l'alternance de deux interventions,<sup>138</sup> en mettant en exergue une cadence dialogique, ne serait-ce que sous la forme de la question et de la réponse<sup>139</sup> entre le bourreau et la victime ou de la ἐρωταπόκρισις simple<sup>140</sup> ou double<sup>141</sup> entre le poète et le saint.

Un instrument plutôt efficace quand il s'agit de concentrer le message est offert par les mots composés, souvent des néologismes, qui tracent avec une netteté pleine de concision le profil éthique et biographique du saint: Eubule,<sup>142</sup> mère de Pantaléon, est définie comme ἀθλητομήτωρ καλλιτεκνος; l'ascèse pratiquée par deux saints,<sup>143</sup> qui connaîtra une glorieuse récompense au ciel, est résumée par les deux *athesaurista* ἀνιπτόσαρκοι et χαμειεύναι; la dormition de la Vierge<sup>144</sup> trouve son exégèse la plus complète par l'épithète κοσμοσώτειρα et par celle du fils, κοσμοπλάστης.

Le défi au niveau de la composition et du style relevé par Christophore est multiple: présenter aux fidèles un tableau exhaustif de l'univers hagiographique, inséré dans

<sup>136</sup> 19 novembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 316: στρατεύομαι σοι σήμερον διὰ ξίφους / τῷ παμβασιλεῖ, δωδεκάς στρατοῦ λέγει.

<sup>137</sup> S. Zénon, 29 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 163: μὴ δελιάσης, Βιτάλιε, πρὸς φλόγα· / ἡγήσομαι γὰρ καὶ προσεισέλω Ζήνων.

<sup>138</sup> SS Akepe et Aitala, 11 décembre: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 21: Ἀκεψεῖν βλέπων με πάσχοντα ξίφει, / Ἀειθαλᾶ, ζήλωσον. ἐζήλωσά σε. L'échange de répliques non signalé est également présent dans Georges de Pisidie *Ep.* 114, sur lequel on peut consulter Enrico Magnelli, 'Giorgio di Pisidia e la sua gotta' (*Epigr.* 114 Tart.), *Eikasmos*, 18 (2007): pp. 375–379.

<sup>139</sup> 15 juin: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 99: θύεις θεοῖς, Γράυς, ἡ ταθῇ σοι τὸ ξίφος; / χαίρω ταθῆτω τοῖς θεοῖς γὰρ οὐ θύω.

<sup>140</sup> S. Pudent, 15 avril: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 400: ποῦ δὴ μετέστης ὡς ἀπετεμήθης, Πούδης; / ποῦ δὴ μετέστην, ἡ πρὸς ἄφθαρτον κλέος; Il est évident que le point de départ de la structure dialogique est tiré du λογοπαίγνιον sur le nom du saint.

<sup>141</sup> S. Tryphon, 1 février: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 158 «Σὺ δέ, Τρύφων, τί;» «Τὸ ξίφος θνήσκω φθάσας»./ «Καιρὸς δὲ τίς σοι τοῦ τέλους;» «Νουμηνία».

<sup>142</sup> 30 mars: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 139: ἐν οὐρανοῖς σύνεστιν ἀθλητῇ τέκνω / ἀθλητομήτωρ καλλιτεκνος Εὐβούλῃ.

<sup>143</sup> 20 juin: *Ἀγιολόγιον*, p. 311: ἀνιπτόσαρκοι καὶ χαμειεύναι δύο / ψυχὰς πλύναντες ὕψος ᾤκησαν πόλου.

<sup>144</sup> 15 août: Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 412: οὐ θαῦμα θνήσκειν κοσμοσώτειραν Κόρην, / τοῦ κοσμοπλάστου σαρκικῶς τεθνηκότος.



la dimension liturgique et le faire selon les mètres et les formes expressives qui sont propres à des genres d'origine antique mais soumis à un processus d'extrême βραχυλογία. Christophore n'essaye pas d'éluder les difficultés, en dissimulant les limites qui sont liées à la nécessité de concentrer dans un espace textuel restreint un amas de données d'information, mais il choisit de mettre en valeur les liens structuraux et de s'orienter dans la direction d'une catéchèse qui s'exprime justement par les éléments qui sembleraient contrarier la clarté de la communication.

Dans les monastiques hexamétriques, il explore différentes formes syntaxiques: l'hypotaxe, encore que sous forme embryonnaire, établit une relation complexe entre le martyr, les bourreaux et l'instrument du martyre; l'épithète, élément caractéristique de la diction homérique, pour caractériser le saint, oriente dans une nouvelle direction sémantique des stylèmes qui sont propres à la tradition épique, sans renoncer à reproduire des morphèmes désormais désuets.

Dans le *Calendrier* iambique, il puise dans les stratégies bien mises au point par la tradition épigrammatique, en parcourant dans toutes les directions les voies de la concision et de la vigueur sans oublier, au même temps, l'impératif catéchétique qui veut que l'exégèse du message soit immédiate. C'est ce qui engendre l'incorporation de la glose dans le texte, souvent sous la forme d'une métaphore explicitée, ou la place qui est accordée à la présence des discours directs. La recherche de συντομία se conjugue avec la γοργότης, penchant stylistique qui est typique du rythme iambique: dans ce sens, la vitesse du iambe καθαρός et les stratégies de vigueur expressive convergent en une opération qui est éminemment rhétorique, c'est-à-dire littéraire et communicative.<sup>145</sup>

L'emploi généralisé et multiforme de l'anaphore, spécialement à la fin et/ou au début des distiques, est le symbole de la condensation expressive et l'accentuation la plus poussée des possibilités structurelles et idéologiques sollicitées par la rigueur de la norme formelle. L'élément binaire (la duplication de la même cadence rythmique iambique) n'est pas perçu comme une contrainte, mais promu au rang de fondement d'un échafaudage structurel qui insiste sur l'opposition d'un avant et d'un après, des attentes et des résultats obtenus, des souffrances affrontées et des récompenses obtenues, de l'apparente victoire du mal et de sa défaite finale. Ces noyaux conceptuels sont à la base de la catéchèse mise en place par le genre instrumental qui trouve en Christophore, sinon son inventeur, pour le moins un modèle de grand succès et l'explorateur de dimensions stylistiques et structurelles que d'autres poètes de haut niveau, comme Théodore Prodrome,<sup>146</sup> parcourront à leur tour.

<sup>145</sup> Lauxtermann, 'Velocity', pp. 25–28. Voir Luca Sarriu, 'Ritmo, metro, poesia e stile. Alcune considerazioni sul dodecasillabo di Michele Psello', *MG*, 6 (2006): pp. 171–197 et M. de Groote, 'The metre in the poems of Christopher Mitylenaios', *BZ*, 90 (2008): pp. 162–192.

<sup>146</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, éd. Augusta Acconcia Longo, *Il calendario giambico in monastici di Teodoro Prodromo* (Rome, 1983).

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## Chapter 8

# The Accentuation in the *Various Verses* of Christophoros Mitylenaios

Marc De Groote

The collection of ‘Various verses’ (Στίχοι διάφοροι) by Christophoros Mitylenaios is preserved essentially in the manuscript Z α XXIX of the *Biblioteca della Badia Greca* in Grottaferrata (thirteenth century; siglum: *G*). This anthology originally consisted of 2,856 verses, divided over 145 poems. It was edited for the first time in 1887 by Antonio Rocchi.<sup>1</sup> A second edition was provided for in 1903 by Eduard Kurtz, who introduced into the text an impressive collection of conjectures, which undoubtedly made it much more understandable.<sup>2</sup> I myself am currently preparing a new edition founded on the complete manuscript tradition of 40 codices and on the numerous significant publications concerning Christophoros in particular and eleventh-century poetry in general, which saw the light during the latest decades.<sup>3</sup>

Until quite recently, it was common practice in editions of Byzantine literature to take no notice whatsoever of the accents found in manuscripts, even to treat them, if that seemed convenient, as faults merely due to the copyists’ ignorance, and to favour the classical rules of accentuation. Eventually, pioneering research on this matter was done by Ciro Giannelli, Athanasios D. Kominis, Odysseas Lampsidis, Carlo M. Mazzucchi and Jacques Noret.<sup>4</sup> They inspired others to tackle the very same problem, as

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<sup>1</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios, ed. A. Rocchi, *Versi di Cristoforo Patrizio editi da un codice della monumentale Badia di Grottaferrata* (Rome, 1887). Other sigla used in this article: *A* = Milan, *Biblioteca Ambrosiana* G 32 sup. (= Gr. 390; end 13th–15th century); *D* = Copenhagen, *Det Kongelige Bibliotek* 1899 (12th–13th century); *M* = Venice, *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*, Fondo antico, Gr. 524 (second-half of the 13th century); *O* = Vatican City, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, Ottob. Gr. 324 (15th century); *Q* = Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, Ancien fonds grec 3044 (end 15th century); *S* = El Escorial, *Real Biblioteca* R III 17 (= Gr. 51; 14th century); *V* = Vatican City, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, Gr. 1357 (14th century); *Ξ* = Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, Ancien fonds grec 1630 (14th century).

<sup>2</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios, ed. E. Kurtz, *Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios* (Leipzig, 1903).

<sup>3</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios, ed. M. De Groote, *Christophori Mitylenaii Versuum uariorum Collectio Cryptensis*, *CCSG*, vol. 74 (Turnhout, forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> Ciro Giannelli, ‘Tetrastici di Teodoro Prodromo sulle feste fisse e sui santi del calendario bizantino’, *AB*, 75 (1957): pp. 308–313; Athanasios D. Kominis, *Τὰ βυζαντινὸν ἱερὸν ἐπὶ γράμμα καὶ οἱ ἐπιγραμματοποιοί* (Athens, 1966), pp. 82–85; Odysseas Lampsidis, ‘Σχόλια εἰς τὴν ἀκουστικὴν μετρικὴν βυζαντινῶν στιχοιργῶν ἰαμβικοῦ τριμέτρου’, *Ἀρχαίον Πόντου*, 31 (1972): pp. 235–340;

was, for instance, done in the exemplary edition of Theodoros Prodromos by Grigorios Papagiannis<sup>5</sup> and in a number of volumes of the *Corpus Christianorum* series.<sup>6</sup> Basing myself on the results produced by my examination of the spelling in the various manuscripts of Christophoros' corpus, I present in this article the accentuation rules which will be followed in my edition.

First, four preliminary remarks. Cases with an accent on another syllable than usual are only four in number; they mainly concern the word οὔμενον, which occurs three times in the text (27, 4; 103, 50; 136, 27), and is always written as a proparoxytonon. The fourth example regards 136, 92, where *G* has λαμπρ...δν...; Kurtz conjectures the genitive plural λαμπρενδύτων ('of people dressed in bright clothes'), instead of the perispomenon λαμπρενδύτων, although the word belongs to the πολίτης type of the first declension. Clearly, he aims at creating a paroxytonic ending of the dodecasyllable, similar to that of the vast majority of verses in the corpus.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, when in proper names the long vowel of the penultimate of a properispomenon comes in a short position, the accent is not changed and remains a circumflex: Ἀγλαοφώντας (42, 62), Νῶε (87, 11). Similarly, the accent is not changed when the short vowel of the penultimate of a paroxytonon comes in a long position: Χριστοφόρος (114, 130). Thirdly, in those cases where the long dichronic vowel of the penultimate of a properispomenon comes in a short position, the accent is changed as well and becomes acute. Thus, one finds ψίχα (1, 32), στύλον (9, 3; 10, 5), στύλοι (10, 1), τρύχον (22, 2), πρεσβύται (27, 31), μεταστάσιν (77, 35), σύκα (88, 1), σκνίπα (109, 130), τρίβε (112, 2), πρεσβύτιν (114, 42), πράσις (114, 49), νεκροπράται (114, 70), σκύλα (126, 5), and κλίνει (130, 1). In proper names, on the contrary, the shortening of the accentuated vowel does not change the accent, which remains circumflex: Κωνσταντίνος (18, 13; 55, 10), Κοσμᾶ (68, 103), Λουκᾶ (82, 2), Κωνσταντίνε (132, 4). Fourthly, short dichronic vowels in a long position do not have their accent changed either; so one reads – with an acute – Καρκίνον (42, 10; *G* Kurtz:

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Carlo M. Mazzucchi, 'Sul sistema di accentazione dei testi greci in età romana e bizantina', *Aegyptus*, 59 (1979): pp. 145–167; Jacques Noret and Constant De Vocht, 'Une orthographie insolite et nuancée, celle de Nicéphore Blemmyde, ou à propos du δέ enclitique', *Byz*, 55 (1985): pp. 493–505; Jacques Noret, 'Quand donc rendrons-nous à quantité d'indéfinis, prétendument enclitiques, l'accent qui leur revient?', *Byz*, 57 (1987): pp. 191–195; Jacques Noret, 'Faut-il écrire οὐκ εἰσιν οὐ οὐκ εἰσίν?', *Byz*, 59 (1989): pp. 277–280; Jacques Noret, 'Notes de ponctuation et d'accentuation byzantines', *Byz*, 65 (1995): pp. 69–88; Jacques Noret, 'L'accentuation de τε en grec byzantin', *Byz*, 68 (1998): pp. 516–518.

<sup>5</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, ed. G. Papagiannis, *Theodoros Prodromos, Jambische und hexametrische Tetrasticha auf die Haupteerzählungen des Alten und Neuen Testaments* (Wiesbaden, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> A similar problem is the question of correct punctuation; see Diether Roderich Reinsch, 'Stixis und Hören', in B. Arsalos and N. Tsironi (eds), *Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> Colloque International de Paléographie Grecque (Drama, 21–27 septembre 2003)*, vol. 1 (Athens, 2008), pp. 259–269.

<sup>7</sup> See Kurtz, *Die Gedichte*, p. ix, n. 1; cf. Paul Maas in a review of this edition, *BZ*, 15 (1906): p. 640: 'so liegt darin keine willkürliche Akzentverschiebung vor (...), sondern eine schon im VI. Jahrh. ganz gewöhnliche Analogiebildung (...), die allerdings in der Kunstsprache des XI. Jahrh. auffällig ist'.

Καρκίνον *autem* *M*), [πάτερ] (58, 1; *Kurtz*: ... *G*), ἄτερ (65, 6), Ἡλιάδες (77, 19), ἅπαν (114, 69). On this basis it seems logical also to write:

οἱ παντοτρώκται τοῦδε μῦες τοῦ δόμου (103, 1) [*sic leg.*: μῦες *G Kurtz*];  
*the mice of this house, who devour everything*;  
 καὶ τοὺς πονηροὺς μῦας οὐκ ἠδυνάμην (103, 68) [*sic leg.*: μῦας *G Kurtz*];  
*and I was not able (to chase away) the evil mice.*

The main difficulty concerning accentuation lies, of course, in the field of the enclitics. In order to deal with this problem, it seems appropriate to make a distinction between ‘usual enclitics’ and ‘new enclitics’.

## Usual Enclitics

### 1. Pronouns

#### (a) Personal pronouns

##### i. *Mou/μοι/με*

With regard to the enclitic forms of the personal pronoun ἐγώ, the eleven cases of the genitive μου show that the classical rules are observed. Therefore, we should indeed also read [Χριστέ] μου (44, 65; *Kurtz*: ... μου *G*) and ἔσπασάς μου (68, 77; *Kurtz*: ἐσπασάς μου *G*). These rules are followed, even if the result is a proparoxytonic *Binnenschluss* after the fifth syllable (=B5):

ἕξ τὰ σκέλη μου, || κἄνπερ οἱ πόδες δύο (21, 2);  
*I (sc. the balance) have six legs, although my feet are two in number*;  
 τὰς ἐλπίδας μου || μὴ κενὰς θήσῃς, ἄναξ (55, 13);  
*don't make my hopes vain, my lord.*

The 37 cases of the dative μοι offer a similar picture. Hence, it seems logical also to accept the following five readings: [σύ μοι] (59, 27; *Kurtz*: ... *G*), [βρώμα μοι] (100, 1; *sic leg.*: ... *G*, βρώμά μοι *Kurtz*),<sup>8</sup> ἐστί μοι (109, 44; *sic leg.*: ἐστί μοι *sic G*, ἔστι μοι *Kurtz*), σῶζ[οιό μοι]<sup>2</sup> (131, 11; *Kurtz*: σῶζ... *G*), and [προξ]ενήσεις μοι (131, 50; *Kurtz*: ...ενήσεις μοι *G*). Again, the classical rules are given more weight than the avoidance of a proparoxytonic B5:

τῶν κιόνων μοι || πάντοθεν κλονουμένων (71, 8);  
*even if my (sc. the tent's) pillars are shaken from all sides*;  
 ὀφθαλμίαν μοι || τὴν μίαν λύσεις τέως (142, 6);  
*then you will liberate me from this single eye disease.*

<sup>8</sup> See below, second final observation.

In the forty cases of the accusative *με* exceptions are absent as well. Hence, Kurtz is right in conjecturing [κρατεῖς *με*] (47, 1; *Kurtz*: ...ε *G*), [φιλεῖς *με*] (59, 11; *Kurtz*: ... *G*) and [καλεῖς *με*] (ibid.; *Kurtz*: ... *G*). Here too, a proparoxytonic B5 doesn't seem to pose any problem, for one finds:

[ἐκ ῥῆ]μάτων *με* || δεξιού, μὴ πεμμάτων (115, 1);  
*salute me with words, not with pastry*;  
 ὅς πολλάκις *με* || καὶ πλανᾷ νῆ τοὺς λόγους (131, 19);  
*who also deceives me frequently, ah, those words!*

Once, the enclitic form follows a preposition:

ποίαν λαβὴν εὑρητε τοῦ πρὸς *με* γράφ[ειν] (91, 2);  
*what opportunity you will find to write to me.*

## ii. Σου/σοι/σε

With respect to the enclitic forms of the personal pronoun *σύ*, the twelve cases of the genitive *σου* show that the classical rules are followed, even if, in one case, the result is a proparoxytonic B5:

καὶ τὴν κτίσιν σου || πᾶσαν εἰς νοῦν λαμβάνων (122, 3);  
*grasping your whole creation with my mind.*

Very much the same applies to the dative *σοι* (24 cases). The word is always enclitic, even if this results in a proparoxytonic B5, as is proven by the following four cases:

χρεῖα χρόνου σοι || καὶ κόπου καὶ λυχνίας (40, 75);  
*you're in need of time, an effort and a lamp*;  
 ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, || καὶ γυναῖκας Λεσβίας (42, 80);  
*verily I say unto you, (you surpass) even the women of Lesbos*;  
 καὶ τίς χάρις σοι || τῆς ἐγέρσεως χάριν (80, 5);  
*it was a deed of recognition for the grace of your resurrection*;  
 ἂν οὖν μέλῃ σοι || σεμνότητος, ὡς λέγεις (145, 5);  
*if you have, as you maintain, venerability at heart.*

Finally, the 33 cases of the accusative *σε* behave in the same way. This even applies when it results in a proparoxytonic B5:

οὐ πρὸς πάλιν σε || καὶ βίαν τῶν σκαμμάτων (68, 81);  
*(having strengthened) you, not for the fight and the violence of the arenas*;  
 ὑποδράμη σε || καὶ λογισμός τις τάχα (101, 3);  
*perhaps too, it will occur to you (that Elisha stayed on earth)*;  
 τί κωλύει σε || καὶ πνέουσιν ἀνέμοις (109, 193);  
*what prevents you even for the blowing winds?*

**(b) The indefinite pronoun τίς/τις**

The indefinite τίς/τις<sup>9</sup> is enclitic when related to the preceding word, including καί and ὥσπερ. This is proven by thirteen cases, such as:

καί τις βαδίζων καὶ προΐσχων λαμπάδα (1, 16);  
*and a man who was walking (with them), holding out a torch;*  
 οὕτω σοφὴ τις τὰς φρένας καὶ ποικίλη (42, 53);  
*so sharp-witted and many-sided (is the creatress of this new heaven);*  
 οὐπω γινώσκων, ναυτικός τις ὦν τάχα (63, 24);  
*not knowing yet, perhaps he is a seaman.*

Eleven cases show that the word, if used independently, meaning *someone, something, some (people), somewhat, somehow*, stays enclitic. So, for instance:

πλὴν εἴ τι πείθῃ τοῖς ἑμοῖς αὐτὸς λόγοις (6, 11);  
*but if you yourself give some credence to my words;*  
 εἴ τις πέποιθε τῶν διδασκόντων νέους (9, 9);  
*if someone of those who teach youngsters, dares to.*

Further, the word is also enclitic, when put between preposition and noun, as is the case in πρὸς τινὰ βραχὺν χρόνον (136, 79).

Two exceptions, however, should be mentioned: in 30, 28 the text reads: ἐγκαρσίως τίς || εἰ θελήσειε βλέπειν ('in case someone would want to look from an oblique angle'). Here the enclitic, although being independent, has an accent, probably in order to avoid a proparoxytonic B5. The second exception is found in 75, 26: λαλέειν τίς εἰ θελήσει ('in case someone will be wanting to speak'). Here the reason is that an Ionic dimeter has a fixed accent on the fourth syllable.

Conversely, τίς/τις is not enclitic if referring, not to the preceding, but to the following word. Consequently, one finds for instance:

ὥς πρὶν τίς ἰχθύς τὸν στατήρα τῷ Πέτρῳ (109, 104);  
*just as a fish (provided) a stater for Peter once;*  
 οἱ γὰρ εἶναι καὶ θεὸς καὶ τί ξένον (109, 209);  
*for you think you are both a god and something wonderful.*

<sup>9</sup> The manuscripts always write the monosyllabic, accentuated forms of τίς with *acutus*; one exception only can be found (τίς Q (114, 76)). Accordingly, in my edition all monosyllabic forms concerned will be written with *acutus*, the disyllabic ones, however, with *gravis*; cf. Noret, 'Quand donc rendrons-nous', p. 193, n. 5.

The same applies when a negation is involved:

μὴ Νῶε τίς γένοιτο (13, 29);  
*in order that no new Noach be born;*  
 οὐκ ἂν φρονῶν τίς ἄξιον τιμῆς κρίνῃ (136, 77);  
*no one who has brains will judge him worthy of esteem.*

Moreover, the word has an accent if emphasized, for instance in cases such as:

τὸν Στυλιανόν, ἀρραγὴ τινὰ στύλον (9, 3);  
*Stylianus, a really indestructible support;*  
 ὑπῆρξε δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ σκέπη τίς ἡ πάγη (103, 58);  
*but the trap became for them a truly real shelter;*  
 ἐνωτίων τί πληθος, ὦ τῆς αἰσχύνῃς (136, 132);  
*a really vast number of earrings, how scandalous!*

Finally, in five cases the metre seems to have determined the accentuation; in all of them an oxytonic B5 is created, in the first four a paroxytonic B5 is thus avoided:

ὡς γνοὺς πλάνος τίς || πίστεως σῆς τὸ ζέον (114, 76);  
*(I heard) that some cheat got wind of your boiling faith;*  
 ὡς ἰέραξ τίς || πέρδικας συλλαμβάνει (122, 53);  
*just like a falcon catches partridges;*  
 ἕως τάμη τίς || εἴθ' ἐκῶν ἢ μὴ θέλων (122, 63);  
*until someone, on purpose or not, cuts (the cobweb);*  
 οὕτω λάλος τίς || καὶ σιγῆς ἀνωτέρα (131, 45);  
*(an owl) so chatty and unable to keep quiet;*  
 ὀχούμενος τίς || μὴ [κρατεῖν τούτου σθένων] (136, 70);  
*a rider who cannot hold that horse in check.*

## 2. Adverbs

### (a) Ποτέ

The indefinite *ποτέ* is enclitic if connected with the preceding word; it is not, when it relates to the following word. Hence, the text reads *ἀνατλήσεις ποτέ* (19, 16), but has:

ἐξ ἀρετῶν πασῶν ἐμψυχον ἀγαλμα πότ' εἶχες (57, 29);  
*you once had the living image of all virtues (in your house);*  
 καὶ δὴ ποτὲ στὰς τῆς φλιάς ἐν τ[ῷ] μ[έσῳ] (103, 32);  
*and sometimes standing in the middle of the doorposts.*



**(b) Πού/που**

The same applies to the indefinite *πού/που*, which is found, relating to the preceding word, in: *μακράν που* (36, 12; 43, 5; 105, 22), *φησί που* (109, 206), *έωρακώς που* (122, 89), and *ώς που* (136, 112). Connected with the following word, however, is:

*δίκτην κοράκων πτώμα πού σκεψαμένων* (82, 4);  
*like ravens, somewhere examining a corpse.*

**(c) Πώς/πως**

The indefinite *πώς/πως* is enclitic too if connected with the preceding word: *μή πως* (11, 6; 77, 102), *δέ πως* (13, 4), *ἄν πως* (40, 41), *περιτρύζουσά πως* (44, 58), *εἴ πως* (109, 136), *συναθροίζουσά πως* (114, 51). The only exception is, again, based on a metrical reason, namely to avoid a proparoxytonic B5:

*ὁμωνύμῳ πῶς || τῇ σχολῇ τῆς παρθένου* (11, 15);  
*somehow in accordance with the name of the school of the Virgin.*

**3. The Conjunction τέ/τε**

The conjunction *τέ/τε* differs from all enclitics already mentioned, as numerous discrepancies are found in the codices concerning the question if the word should or should not be treated as an enclitic without an accent of its own. As Noret rightly stated, nowhere in Greek texts *loci* can be indicated where the accentuation of the conjunction is imperative: it all depends on the rhythm of the sentence.<sup>10</sup> Hence, on the basis of the manuscript tradition, it seems correct not to write an accent in thirty-seven cases. Conversely, I would use the accentuated form if a proparoxytonic B5 can thus be prevented:

*ἀντικρύ μου τέ || πρὸς βραχὺν σπάντα χρόνον* (36, 36);  
*and standing in front of me for a short time;*  
*καὶ πορφύρας τέ || μέλχο[ ... ]* (62, 8);  
*πρεσβυτέρων τέ || καὶ διακόνων ἅμα* (63, 44);  
*of the presbyters and deacons simultaneously;*  
*τοῦ πανστροφου τέ || καὶ παλιμβόλου βίου* (73, 4);  
*of the changeable and unsteady life.*

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Noret, 'L'accentuation de *τε*', p. 516: ( ... ) 'aucune phrase, par son sens, n'oblige jamais à mettre un *τε* en évidence ( ... ) L'accentuation dépend du rythme de la phrase'.

#### 4. Particles

##### (a) *Γε and τοι*

The particles *γε* and *τοι* are regular; they never bear an accent.

##### (b) *Πά*

The particle *πά* keeps its accent (10, 12; 52, 15). Consequently, in 8, 30, where the particle is elided, one should write: *ἐπεὶ ῥ' ἱκανόν* (with *gravis* on *ἐπεὶ*).

#### 5. Verbs

##### (a) *Εἰμί*

Regarding the first person singular of the verb *εἰμί*, the manuscripts almost completely agree in preserving an accent on the second syllable. In five cases, this has metrical consequences: in four verses a proparoxytonic B5 is avoided in this way, while in the fifth case the accent prevents an oxytonic *Binnenschluss* after the seventh syllable according to the Law of Maas:<sup>11</sup>

δίκαιος εἰμὶ || καὶ δικαίων ἀκρότης (21, 1);  
*I am just and I excel among all that is just;*  
 ὁποῖος εἰμὶ || γνοῦσα κραυγάζει· “Τάλας” (59, 10);  
*knowing the state I’m in, she cries: Poor dear!*  
 ἄπετρος εἰμὶ || καὶ κινούμενος δόμος (71, 1);  
*I am a house not made of stones, and mobile;*  
 σύμφηφος εἰμὶ || τῇσδε ταύτῃ τῇ κρίσει (116, 3);  
*I agree with the judgment thereon;*  
 στοᾶ ξύλων ἄμοιρος || εἰμὶ καὶ λίθων (35, 1);  
*I am a portico without wood and stones.*

The oxytonic third person singular *ἐστί(ν)* keeps its accent if preceded by a proparoxytonon or proparisponenon. In 90, 125 a proparoxytonic B5 is thus avoided:

ἃ πᾶσιν ἐστί || δῆλα τοῖς ἐν τῇ πόλει;  
*which is known to all who are in the City.*

<sup>11</sup> Paul Maas, ‘Der byzantinische Zwölfsilber’, *BZ*, 12 (1903): pp. 278–323, esp. p. 319.

However, the verb becomes enclitic after an oxytonon, as is shown by seven cases, such as:

ἀτὰρ τίς οἶδε; πτηνός ἐστι τὴν φύσιν (40, 18);  
*but who knows? He is winged by nature;*  
 πρόσσειν, ἐγγύς ἐστιν, αὔριον φθάνει (68, 2);  
*(the feast) approaches, is near, is tomorrow;*  
 θεοῦ στρατηγός ἐστιν ὑψ[ίστου ...] (68, 25);  
*he is the general of God most high.*

Logically one should also write:

τὸ πάσχα δεσμός ἐστιν εἰρήνης μέγας (108, 1; Kurtz: ... *G*, δεσμός ἐστιν *SΞ*);  
*Easter is a big bond of peace.*

If preceded by γάρ, the form remains enclitic, although this results in a proparoxytonic B5:

πολλὴ γάρ ἐστι || πίστις ἡ σὴ καὶ λίαν (114, 87);  
*for your faith is great, too great even;*  
 οὕτω γάρ ἐστιν, || ὥσπερ οἶμαι, καὶ πρέπον (114, 128);  
*for that's the appropriate way, methinks.*

Conversely, when γάρ is not involved, the form becomes oxytonic to avoid a proparoxytonic B5:

ὁ σταυρὸς ἐστίν, || ὅς σε τη[ρεῖ ...] (30, 29);  
*it is the cross that protects you;*  
 ὃ φροντὶς ἐστὶ || γνώσε[ως ...] (131, 9);  
*who cares for knowledge.*

The paroxytonic form *ἔστι(ν)* is used in two specific cases only, namely when it is the beginning of a new sentence, and if preceded by the negation οὐκ, thus following the rule which was already formulated by the second-century grammarian Herodian:<sup>12</sup>

ὧν τὸν μὲν καλέουσι Δεκέμβριον – ἔστι δὲ πρῶτος – (17, 6);  
*one of which is called December: it comes first;*  
 [ ... ] μοι νύμφης πέρι· ἔστι δὲ τ[αῦτα] (81, 1);  
 [ ... ] *me about the bride; these are her gifts;*  
 οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτο, φησίν, ἡ θεοῦ δόμος (95, 14);  
*this can only be, he says, the house of God;*

<sup>12</sup> Aelius Herodianos, *Prosodia catholica*: 'τὸ ἔστιν ἡνίκα ἀρχεται λόγου ἢ ὅτε ὑποτάσσεται τῇ οὐ ἀποφάσει ἢ τῷ καὶ ἢ εἰ ἢ ἀλλὰ συνδέσμων ἢ τῷ ὡς ἐπιρρήματι ἢ τῷ τοῦτο, τηλικαῦτα τὴν ὀξείαν ἔχει ἐπὶ τοῦ ε' (Herodiani Technici reliquiae. Tomus I Praefationem et Herodiani Prosodiam catholicam continens [= *Grammatici Graeci* III.1.1], ed. A. Lentz (Leipzig, 1867, repr. Stuttgart, 1976), p. 553).

οὐκ ἔστι γινῶναι τὰς τροπὰς τὰς μυριάς (109, 51);  
*it is impossible to know its multiple changes.*

The third person plural *εἰσί* always keeps its accent, except if preceded by *γάρ*. As a consequence, one finds *ἥλιον εἰσί* (57, 17) and *ὥς εἰσὶ* (114, 104), but *γάρ εἰσι* (141, 4).

### (b) Φημί

The verb *φημί* is found to be enclitic after a proclitic as is shown in 77, 47 (*ὥς φησι*). In all other cases the verb normally keeps its accent. So one gets *πολλὰ φημί* (11, 5), *ἦν φασὶ* (90, 11), *τῆσδε φημί* (105, 40), and *Ἰὼβ φησὶ που* (109, 206). In this way a proparoxytonic B5 is sometimes prevented:

ἀμφ' αὐτὸ φημί || τὸ Στρατήγιον, πᾶτερ (114, 132);  
*near the Strategion, I mean, father;*  
 ἐκείνο φημί || τὸ ξένον, πῶς ὑγρότης (122, 59);  
*I speak about this extraordinary fact, namely how the fluid (from the spider's belly becomes a cobweb).*

## New Enclitics

In addition to the traditional enclitics some new ones are encountered as well. The accent on the particle *δέ* is certain in 186 cases, normally without disagreements between the manuscripts, the only exceptions being *διατριβῇ δέ* (11, 2), where codex *D* writes *διατριβῇ δε*, apparently considering the particle as an encliticon, and *μορφᾷ δέ* (141, 3), where manuscripts *A* and *M* do likewise and read *μορφᾷ δε*.

Five cases remain where the manuscripts seem to prefer to treat the word as an encliticon, each time preceded by an oxytonon or perispomenon:

ζῶσαν τρυφήν δε σοὺς σοφῶς τρυφῶν λόγους (27, 53);  
*enjoying the living delight that your words constitute;*  
 αὐτός δε φεύγε καὶ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ὄλων (36, 10);  
*you yourself, flee, even before all the others;*  
 κἂν σοί δε πρώτῳ θλίψεως ἐπησθόμην (44, 11);  
*and in you first I noticed grief;*  
 σὺν ἡδονῇ δε τοῦτο δέξαι καρδίας (45, 3);  
*accept this with a joyful heart;*  
 αὐτός δέ μοι, βέλτιστε Παντελεήμων (68, 71);  
*and for me you yourself, my dearest Panteleemon.*

The elided particle *δ'* behaves normally in 62 cases. However, if it is used independently, meaning *the other, the aforementioned*, or, adverbially, *then again*,<sup>13</sup> it becomes enclitic:

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Noret and De Vocht, 'Une orthographie insolite', p. 497.

ὁ δ' αὖ κρατῆρα χερσὶ μυστικὸν φέρων (63, 32);  
*the other one, while having in his hand the mystical chalice;*  
 τό δ' αὖ πεδῆθ' ἐν καὶ σιγῇ [κεκλεισμένον] (77, 54);  
*the other one (sc. my mouth), having been tied up and shut in silence;*  
 ὁ δ' αὖ τὸ σῶφρον καὶ τὸ μέτριον λέγει (77, 92);  
*the other one speaks about prudence and moderation.*

By analogy one should also write:

[τό δ'] αὖ θεωρῶν ἡγριωμένην ἄγαν (109, 54);  
*then again, when you see (the sea) all too wild.*

Moreover, in *G* the elided particle appears to be enclitic without exception after the intensive pronoun αὐτός (8, 9; 36, 5; 109, 132), the personal pronoun σύ (13, 15; 19, 4), and the accusative κεφαλὴν (19, 13). Twice *G*'s reading is supported by another manuscript, namely by *O* in 13, 15, and by *D* in 36, 5. Basing myself on these data I would prefer to accept *G*'s accentuation, except in 19, 13 where the reason for κεφαλὴν δ' remains completely obscure. Examples:

αὐτός δ' ἐξερῶ πικρὸν μόρον, ὃν περ ὑπέστη (8, 9);  
*I myself will tell about the bitter fate he has suffered;*  
 σοὶ δ' ἐλεημοσύνη τι[μᾶται] ἔξοχα πάντων (19, 4);  
*your mercy is honoured, more than that of all the others.*

Hence, one also expects to read:

σύ δ' ὁ κραταιὸς οὐ μόνον χρυσορροᾷς (55, 3; *sic leg.*: ... *G*, σὺ δ' *V Kurtz*);  
*you, however, strong as you are, not only make gold flow;*  
 [σύ δ' ἄμ] πελοφυγέ, καὶ προθύμως προτρέπεις (105, 3; *sic leg.*: ... *G*, σὺ δ' *Kurtz*);  
*but you, winegrower, also incite enthusiastically.*

The particle μέν occurs only twice without accent, both times in *G*: ὁ μεν (1, 11) and πῇ μεν (105, 37). Under these circumstances, I am inclined to believe that the copyist is to blame, rather than to consider it to be a new encliticon.<sup>14</sup>

The same applies to the particle μήν. Seven cases prove that it bears an accent: ναὶ μήν (6, 6; 128, 9), οὐ μήν (16, 16), γε μήν (103, 42), καὶ μήν (114, 88; 132, 2), and οὕτε μήν (122, 88). In 8, 2, however, *G* erroneously writes:

πικρὰ δέ μην καὶ τοῖσι μόρου κερνῶνται ἄλεια;  
*for them too truly bitter goblets of fate are mixed.*

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Papagiannis, *Theodoros Prodromos, Tetrasticha*, p. 214.

## Final Observations Concerning Monosyllabic Enclitics

(1) In order to provide emphasis, the accent of a monosyllabic enclitic is sometimes thrown onto the final syllable of the preceding paroxytonon:<sup>15</sup>

ὦ πόσά μοι ἐπέτελλες, ὅσα ψυχὴν ὀνίνησιν (57, 11);  
*oh, how numerous the orders you used to give me, orders which help my soul;*  
 εἰ μὴ κορυφὴν καὶ τὰ βάθρα μου λέγεις (71, 5);  
*if you do not speak about my top and bottom;*  
 καὶ λείψανον κάλλιστον, εἴπερ ἄλλο τι (114, 123);  
*and a marvellous relic, if any;*  
 ἄλλος γυναικὸς κόσμον, ἄλλος ἄλλο τι (136, 25);  
*the one a womanly hairstyle, the other something else.*

(2) A monosyllabic enclitic normally does not throw its accent on a preceding properispomenon:<sup>16</sup>

ἀνέλκυσον θᾶττον με τὸν σὸν οἰκέτην (7, 4);  
*quick, pull me upwards, who am your servant;*  
 λοξοὺς συνιστώντας με κίονας φέρω (71, 7);  
*I have oblique pillars which support me;*  
 χεῖρας τ' ἥδ' ἐ πόδας λαμπροῖο ἀγάλματος οἶον (81, 11);  
*hands and feet as of a splendid statue;*  
 τοιούσδε πολλοὺς οἶκος οὗτος μου τρέφει (103, 40);  
*that house of mine feeds such (mice) in great quantity;*  
 μᾶλλον γε μὴν αὖξοντας ἐκ τῶν ὠδίνων (103, 42);  
*destined to become even more numerous, due to their litters;*  
 πρὸ τοῦ θανεῖν δὲ ζῶντι μοι νῦν εἰσέτι (105, 52);  
*but before dying and still alive now;*  
 [παράκ]αλοῦντι πρόσ<σ>χεσ ὦτα μοι κλίνας (109, 46);  
*lend me your ears, I incite you, and be attentive;*  
 φλοῖσβον τε παύειν καὶ γαλήνην δεικνύειν (109, 195);  
*to calm the roaring noise and show the stillness of the sea.*

However, the accent is thrown on the preceding word, if there is emphasis:

αἰτοῦντί μοι γοῦν δὸς παθῶν <θᾶττον> λύσιν (33, 2);  
*hence, grant to me quickly, I ask you, the deliverance of passions;*  
 ἐκεῖνό μοι θαύμαζε καὶ δύνῃ νόει (122, 58);  
*that is what you must admire, and, if you can, reflect.*

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Noret, 'Notes de punctuation', pp. 86–87.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Noret, 'Notes de punctuation', p. 86.

(3) A monosyllabic enclitic does not throw its accent on a preceding enclitic if that one is monosyllabic as well:

εἴ τις σε σεπτοῖς δεξιούται λειψάνοις (114, 4);  
*if someone remembers you with august relics;*  
 οὐκ ἂν γε σοι λείψει πλῆθος λειψάνων (114, 48);  
*a large collection of relics would not fail you.*

This is even true when a proparoxytonic B5 is the result:

καὶ πιστά σου γε || ταῦτα πάντα, φιλάτη (77, 98);  
*and all these things of yours deserve loyalty, my dearest.*

One exception remains, namely if the enclitic δε is involved:

αὐτός δέ μοι, βέλτιστε Παντελεήμων (68, 71; already cited).

On the other hand, two cases show that a monosyllabic enclitic does throw its accent on a preceding enclitic, if that one is disyllabic:

οὐκ ἂν καταρράξῃς με· σῶος εἰμί σοι (71, 11);  
*you won't be able to break me: I am safe, you know;*  
 [ὥσπερ τις ἄσκ]ό[ς] || ἐστὶ μοι γλεύκους ζέων (109, 44);  
*my (heart) is like a wineskin, fermenting with wine.*

In the first case this ensures a paroxytonic ending of the verse; in the second example the probable reason is the fact that ἐστὶ is the first word after the B5.

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## Chapter 9

# On the Inscriptional Versions of the Epigrams of Christophoros Mitylenaios

Andreas Rhoby

It is now generally accepted that epigrams played an important role in Byzantine literature. We recall in this connection Herbert Hunger's statement in his magisterial handbook: 'Den größten Erfolg auf dem Gebiete der Profandichtung hatten die Byzantiner zweifellos in der Epigrammatik aufzuweisen'.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of whether one agrees with this statement or not, the comment should not refer to *Profandichtung* only, but *Dichtung* in general, since the Byzantines excelled particularly in the religious epigram.<sup>2</sup>

Epigrams differ from ordinary poems primarily by their real or potential inscriptional use.<sup>3</sup> It may be surprising to learn how many Byzantine epigrams are still preserved *in situ*, that is, on objects.<sup>4</sup>

While most of the inscriptional epigrams are transmitted anonymously, a limited number of verses can be attributed to known authors.<sup>5</sup> Christophoros Mitylenaios, active in the first half of the eleventh century, is the author whose epigrams are most often still

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (2 vols, Munich, 1978), vol. 2, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Athanasios Komines, *Tò βυζαντινὸν ἱερὸν ἐπιγράμμα καὶ οἱ ἐπιγραμματοποιοὶ* (Athens, 1966).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Marc Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> In the framework of the project 'Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung' at the Austrian Academy of Sciences c.1200 inscriptional epigrams have been collected (chronological limits: AD 600–1500). To this category belong also epigrams which are used in manuscripts as quasi-inscriptions, that is, in the margins of miniatures, verses accompanying miniatures or figure poems. On the project: Wolfram Hörandner, 'Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung', in *L'épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique: projets actuels et questions de méthodologie* (Paris, 2003), pp. 153–160. The first two volumes have already been published: Andreas Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken* (= Wolfram Hörandner, Andreas Rhoby and Anneliese Paul (eds), *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, vol. 1) (Vienna, 2009); Andreas Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst* (= Wolfram Hörandner, Andreas Rhoby and Anneliese Paul (eds), *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, vol. 2) (Vienna, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Anneliese Paul, 'Dichtung auf Objekten. Inschriftlich erhaltene griechische Epigramme vom 9. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert: Suche nach bekannten Autorennamen', in Martin Hinterberger and Elisabeth Schiffer (eds), *Byzantinische Sprachkunst. Studien zur byzantinischen*

preserved *in situ*.<sup>6</sup> However, his verses are not to be found on contemporary monuments for there are hardly any cases in which author and monument are contemporary.<sup>7</sup> They appear in churches from the late twelfth to the middle of the sixteenth century.

Verses of Christophoros Mitylenaios are preserved accompanying frescoes in the following places (in chronological order). They all belong to his metrical calendar (Συναξάριον δίστιχον ιαμβικόν).<sup>8</sup>

- Lagoudera (Cyprus), Panagia tou Arakos, a. 1192
- Kranidi (Greece), Hagia Triada, a. 1244
- Thessalonike (Greece), Hagios Nikolaos Orphanos, a. 1310–1320
- Treskavac (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), katholikon of the Bogorodica monastery, a. 1334–1343
- Trabzon (Turkey), Hagios Sabas, a. 1411
- Kremikovtzi (Bulgaria), Sveti Georgi, a. 1493
- Platanistasa (Cyprus), Timios Stauros tou hagiasmati, a. 1494
- Loubaras (Cyprus), Hagios Mamas, a. 1495
- Kastoria (Greece), Hagios Ioannes Theologos, a. 1552

One can assume with certainty that the artists' source was not a collection of Mitylenaios' works but rather the *Menaia*, in which Mitylenaios' metrical calendar was inserted in the twelfth century.<sup>9</sup>

Verses from Mitylenaios' metrical calendar are preserved as inscriptions for the following days of the church year:<sup>10</sup>

September 1: Platanistasa (II, no. Add30)

September 2: Platanistasa, Loubaras (I, no. 254, no. 230a)

September 29: Lagoudera, Platanistasa (I, no. 225, no. 257)

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*Literatur gewidmet Wolfram Hörandner zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin/New York, 2007), pp. 234–265; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, pp. 53–55.

<sup>6</sup> On the biography Enrica Follieri, 'Le poesie di Cristoforo di Mitilene come fonte storica', *ZRVI*, 8 (1964): pp. 133–148.

<sup>7</sup> Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, pp. 53–55.

<sup>8</sup> *Αγιολόγιον τῆς ὀρθοδόξου ἐκκλησίας*, ed. Sophronios Eustratiades (Athens, 1976); Enrica Follieri (ed.), *I calendari in metro innografico di Cristoforo Mitileneo* (2 vols, Brussels, 1980), vol. 2, *passim*. Cf. Jean Darrouzès, 'Les calendriers byzantins en vers', *REB*, 16 (1958): pp. 59–84: 61–73. See also the contribution by Cresci elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>9</sup> Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 1, pp. 12–13; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, p. 116.

<sup>10</sup> The numbers within the brackets refer to the edition of the epigrams in Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken* (I) and Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen* (II). The epigrams of September 1 and May 24 were discovered by the author during a visit to the church of Platanistasa in May 2008. Cf. Andreas Rhoby, 'Metrical Greek Inscriptions in Medieval Churches of Cyprus', in *Proceedings of the IV International Cyprological Congress, Leukosia (May 2008)* (in press).

December 25: Kranidi, Kastoria<sup>11</sup> (I, no. 138)  
 January 15: Platanistasa (I, no. 255)  
 January 20: Treskavac (I, no. 34)  
 January 22–29: Treskavac (I, no. 35–42)  
 January 31: Treskavac (I, no. 43)  
 March 19: Treskavac (I, no. 44)  
 March 24–25: Treskavac (I, no. 46–47)  
 March 27–28: Treskavac (I, no. 49–50)  
 April 10–11: Treskavac (I, no. 53–54)  
 April 13: Treskavac (I, no. 55)  
 April 15: Thessalonike, Treskavac (I, no. 114, no. 57)  
 April 16: Thessalonike (I, no. 115)  
 April 23: Kremikovtzi, Treskavac (I, no. 2, no. 58)  
 April 25–26: Treskavac (I, no. 59–60)  
 May 24: Platanistasa (II, no. Add31)  
 June 12: Trabzon,<sup>12</sup> Platanistasa (I, no. 219, no. 258)  
 August 13–14: Thessalonike (I, no. 116–117)

In all, 32 different epigrams from Mitylenaios' metrical calendar are preserved in the churches just listed. The majority (22) is to be found in the narthex of the Treskavac katholikon.<sup>13</sup> In the narthex of the church of Hagios Nikolaos Orphanos in Thessalonike only four epigrams of Mitylenaios are preserved; however, one can assume that originally more of his epigrams were inscribed, perhaps just as many as in Treskavac, since large parts of the narthex' paintings are today no longer visible.<sup>14</sup>

In Thessalonike and Treskavac the epigrams accompany depictions of the saints' martyrdoms, whereas in the other churches they accompany merely depictions of the saints or are inscribed on the scrolls they are holding. In Treskavac there are additional depictions of martyrdoms – five in all, namely on 22, 26, 29, and 31 March and 14 April – which are accompanied by epigrams with a similar structure; these verses, however, were not composed by Mitylenaios. This is a further proof of the fact that the artists never copied their texts from a manuscript of Mitylenaios' works but from the *Menaia*. In the richly decorated church of Platanistasa one also finds epigrams on the scrolls of other saints where the formal structure is reminiscent of the verses of Mitylenaios.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Today only v. 1 is preserved in Kastoria; however, it can be assumed that originally both verses were inscribed, cf. Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, p. 235.

<sup>12</sup> This is the only place where in addition to the dodecasyllables Mitylenaios' hexameter verse on the relevant day of the church year is also preserved: Δωδεκάτη ἀχίτωνα Ὀνούφριον ἐκ βίου ἤραν, Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 319; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, p. 315.

<sup>13</sup> Pavle Mijović, *Menolog. Istorijsko-umetnička istraživanja* (Belgrade, 1973), pp. 307ff.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Charalampos Bakirtzes, *Ἅγιος Νικόλαος Ὁρφανός. Οἱ Τοιχογραφίες – Άγιος Νικόλαος Ὁρφανός. The Wall Paintings* (Thessalonike, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken*, no. 256–258; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, no. Add28–Add29.

In the following parts reference is made to different epigrams in the churches listed above. Linguistic peculiarities will be discussed and the inscriptional evidence will be assessed with focus on the question whether it contains useful variants for the establishment of Mitylenaios' text. The basis of the texts is Follieri's edition; inscriptional differences are discussed in the commentary.<sup>16</sup>

*September 1: Platanistasa (II, no. Add30 Rhoby = II 9 Follieri)*

Λιπὼν Συμεὼν τὴν ἐπὶ στύλου βάσιν  
τὴν ἐγγὺς εὔρε τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου στάσιν.

*After Symeon had left the base on the column  
he found his place near God, the Logos.*

In the inscription in Planistasa as well as in cod. *Athon. Pantel.* 2 (twelfth century), fol. 186<sup>r</sup>, στάσιν appears at the end of v. 1 as well as v. 2. Concerning the content, there is no problem; however, the pun (βάσιν – στάσιν) is better expressed in the variant which is transmitted in the other manuscripts. It is not unusual to find confusion over similar words that appear in the original text either next to or immediately under each other. For example, in Mitylenaios' epigram on September 2 (Ἀκμαῖος ὦν Τριάδος εἰς πίστιν Μάμας, / ἀκμαῖς τριαίνης καρτερεῖ τετρωμένος), which is also transmitted as an inscription (in Platanistasa and Loubaras), one reads in cod. *Par. gr.* 3041, fol. 105, at the beginning of v. 2 ἀκμαῖος (instead of ἀκμαῖς), which is, however, syntactically not possible.

*September 29: Lagoudera, Platanistasa (I, no. 225 and no. 257 Rhoby = II 39 Follieri)*

Σκίλλης ἀμύνη, Κυριακέ, πικρία  
γεῦσιν γλυκεῖαν ἢ θανεῖν κατεκρίθης.

*You defend yourself, Kyriakos, with the onion's bitterness  
against the sweet taste through which you were sentenced to die.*

In Lagoudera the inscription transmits ΓΑΥΚΗΑC in v. 2. Is this (in normalized orthography: γλυκεῖας) a useful variant? First, one thinks of a substantive ἡ γλυκεῖα with the meaning 'sweetness'; however, no form with this meaning is attested. ἡ γλυκεῖα is, however, attested as equivalent of ἡ γλυκόρριζα ('sweet-root' [a plant]), first in

<sup>16</sup> The following remarks are additions to the commentaries in Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken* (I) und Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen* (II).

Theophrastos,<sup>17</sup> and later in Galen,<sup>18</sup> who was very popular in Byzantium.<sup>19</sup> The painter perhaps did not understand γεῦσιν γλυκεῖαν, which refers to the fall of Adam<sup>20</sup> and was misled by the ‘taste of the sweet-root’.

December 25: Kranidi (I, no. 138 Rhoby = II 123 Follieri)

Θεὸς τὸ τεχθέν, ἡ δὲ μήτηρ παρθένος·  
τί μείζον ἄλλον καινὸν εἶδεν ἡ κτίσις;

*God is the child, the mother the virgin.  
Which other greater news has the creation seen?*

The epigram is transmitted with the title Χριστοφόρου εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν (sc. γέννησιν) also in the Philes codex *Escur.* X.IV.20, fol. 1<sup>v</sup>.<sup>21</sup> Before this epigram the codex transmits a similar one with the title Εἰς τὴν γέννησιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ,<sup>22</sup> which is strongly reminiscent – at least at the beginning – of Mitylenaios’ verses: Θεὸς τὸ τεχθέν, ἡ τεκούσα παρθένος, / σπορᾶς ἄνευ σύλληψις, ἄφθορος τόκος / τοῖς γὰρ ἀτεχνῶς σωστικοῖς ἐναντίοις / ἔδει λυθῆναι τοῖς βροτοῖς τὰναντία.<sup>23</sup> One is tempted to consider whether this epigram also belongs to Mitylenaios. However, since the phrase σπορᾶς ἄνευ σύλληψις, ἄφθορος τόκος is attested in Philes’ oeuvre elsewhere<sup>24</sup> and since the epigram consists of four verses, Philes’ authorship seems to be certain. The question of how Mitylenaios’ epigram ended up in the Philes codex remains open.

In addition, Mitylenaios’ epigram on 25 March which is preserved as an inscription in the Treskavac monastery is transmitted in cod. *Escur.* X.IV.20, fol. 1<sup>r</sup> under the name of Manuel Philes; there it bears the title Χριστοφόρου δίστιχον εἰς τὸν αὐτόν (sc. εὐαγγελισμόν).<sup>25</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. LSJ, s.v. γλυκύς II 2.

<sup>18</sup> For example Galenos, *Opera omnia*, ed. C.G. Kühn (Leipzig, 1827), vol. XIII, pp. 20, 28, and so on.

<sup>19</sup> Vivian Nutton, ‘Galen in Byzantium’, in Michael Grünbart, Ewald Kislinger, Anna Muthesius and Dionysios Ch. Stathakopoulos (eds.), *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium (400–1453). Proceedings of the International Conference (Cambridge, 8–10 September 2001)* (Vienna, 2007), pp. 171–176.

<sup>20</sup> Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 39, n. 201.

<sup>21</sup> Manuel Philes, *Carmina*, ed. E. Miller (Paris, 1855), vol. 2, p. 4, no. V.

<sup>22</sup> Also in cod. *Par. gr.* 2876, fol. 259 (= Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 431, no. CCXXII).

<sup>23</sup> Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 4, no. IV.

<sup>24</sup> Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 72, no. CLX 1.

<sup>25</sup> Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 3, no. II.

*January 23:* Treskavac (I, no. 36 Rhoby = II 151 Follieri)

Ἀγαθαγγέλου καὶ Κλήμεντος αἱμάτων  
τὸ τοῦ ξίφους δάψαιμον ἐπλήσθη στόμα.

*By Agathangelos' and Klemens' blood  
the sword's bloodthirsty top was soaked.*

In v. 2 the inscription preserves ΕΠΑΛΗΚΤΗ, which is to be corrected to ἐπλήσθη. The inscriptional form is, however, not without parallel: in vernacular Greek one encounters sometimes the aorist passive ending -ήστη (instead of -ήσθη), for example, *Actes de Vatopédi*, I. *Des origines à 1329* (Paris, 2001), p. 26, p. 18 (a. 1297): ἐμερήστη ἡ τιαυτή γῆ (= ἐμερίσθη ἡ τοιαύτη γῆ); Digen. Akrit. Z III 779 (Trapp): γονεῖς τε καὶ τὴν πίστιν μου ὡς διὰ σέ ἐρνήστην.<sup>26</sup>

*January 26:* Treskavac (I, no. 39 Rhoby = II 153 Follieri)

Καὶ γῆν λιπόντας τοὺς περὶ Ξενοφῶντα  
ἄβρᾶ ξενίζω τοῦ λόγου πανδαισία.

*Even if Xenophon's dependants have left earth  
I host them with the Logos' opulent meal.*

The inscriptional version differs from the one in the manuscripts in two places: at the end of v. 1 [ ... ]ΦΩΝΤ is transmitted; above the tau one recognizes a small omikron with an abbreviation line, which proves that here [Ξενο]φώντο(ς) is the correct reading. It is not necessary to correct the genitive because περὶ + genitive with the meaning 'near' is also attested elsewhere.<sup>27</sup> At the end of v. 2 the inscription offers πανδαισίω – the omega at the end is clearly readable. Since also πανδαίσιον is attested quite well elsewhere,<sup>28</sup> the form can be allowed to stand in the text.

*January 31:* Treskavac (I, no. 43 Rhoby = II 157 Follieri)

Κύρω συναθλῶν Ἰωάννης πρὸς ξίφος  
συνθαυματουργεῖ καὶ μετὰ ξίφος Κύρω.

*Ioannes, together with Kyros resisting the sword,  
works wonders together with Kyros even after the sword.*

<sup>26</sup> On this phenomenon Geoffrey Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers* (Chichester, 2010), pp. 281–282.

<sup>27</sup> LSJ, s.v. A I.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. LSJ, s.v.; LBG, s.v.

In v. 2 the inscription offers  $\Xi\Phi\Theta\Upsilon\text{C}$  with the genitive ending clearly visible. The change to  $\xi\acute{\iota}\phi\omicron\varsigma$ , which is transmitted in the manuscripts, is justified, since the sense of the epigram is not 'Ioannes ... works wonders along with Kyros also with the sword' but 'Ioannes ... works wonders along with Kyros also after the sword (that is, after the martyrdom)'. However,  $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$  + genitive can also bear a temporal meaning. In LSJ one finds two records (both in Thukydides):<sup>29</sup> 1, 6, 5:  $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$  τοῦ γυμνάζεσθαι ἡλείψαντο; 5, 25, 3:  $\xi\zeta\omega\theta\epsilon\upsilon\eta\delta\epsilon$  μετ' ἀνοκωχῆς οὐ βεβαίου ἐβλαπτον ἀλλήλους τὰ μάλιστα. If one keeps the genitive  $\xi\acute{\iota}\phi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  in the text, v. 2 could be translated as 'Ioannes ... works wonders along with Kyros during the sword (that is, during the martyrdom)'.

*April 16:* Thessalonike (I, no. 115 Rhoby = II 240 Follieri)

Χιῶν τὸ πῦρ ἦν τῇ Χιονίᾳ τάχα  
οὐ συµµετασχεῖν ἠγάπησεν Ἀγάπη.

*Snow was soon the fire for Snow-white (Chionia)  
in which the Lovely (Agape) loved to take part.*

On the inscriptional  $\text{ΑΓΑΠΗC[EN]}$  in v. 2 two things have to be taken into account: perhaps the artist already had the following Ἀγάπη in mind or before his eyes and therefore forgot to provide the verb with an augment. On the other hand, aorist forms without augment are not unusual in vernacular Greek, the every-day language of the painter.<sup>30</sup> Also v. 1 contains a variant from the text in the manuscripts: Despite the fact that today the second half of the verse is hardly readable, one recognizes five letters:  $[\tau\eta\text{X}] \iota\omicron[\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha] \tau[\acute{\alpha}]\chi\alpha$ . Tsitouridou, who was obviously able to read more, edited  $\text{THC XION[IAC TA]XA}$ . The genitive τῆς Χιονίας instead of the dative τῇ Χιονίᾳ in the manuscripts is not impossible, particularly in view of the wide-spread phenomenon of the loss of dative in Byzantine Greek.<sup>31</sup>

*April 25:* Treskavac (I, no. 59 Rhoby = II 255 Follieri)

Σύροντες εἰς γῆν Μάρκον οἱ μαιφόνιοι  
πρὸς οὐρανοὺς πέμποντες αὐτὸν ἠγνόουν.

*The murderers who pulled Markos to the ground  
did not recognize that they were sending him to heaven.*

<sup>29</sup> s.v. μετὰ A IV.

<sup>30</sup> On the suppression of temporal augment cf. Antonius N. Jannaris, *An Historical Greek grammar* [ ... ] (London, 1897), pp. 186–187.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Erich Trapp, 'Der Dativ und der Ersatz seiner Funktionen in der byzantinischen Vulgärdichtung bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts', *JÖB*, 14 (1965): pp. 21–34.

The inscription transmits οὐ(ρα)νόν in v. 2; this form is also to be read in the Mitylenaios codex *Vat. Pal. gr.* 383, fol. 194<sup>v</sup>.<sup>32</sup> Since by means of the singular the contrast γῆν (v. 1) – οὐρανόν (v. 2) is better expressed, οὐ(ρα)νόν is indeed the better form. In this case the text in the Follieri edition could indeed be improved.

The aim of this analysis of a select group of examples was to illustrate that sometimes inscriptional variants offer reasonable alternative readings to a text's manuscript tradition. Inscriptions are therefore a valuable testimony for the reception history of a text.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Follieri, *I calendari*, vol. 2, p. 255, n. 216.

<sup>33</sup> Jean Irigoin, *La tradition des textes grecs pour une critique historique* (Paris, 2003).



## Chapter 10

# A Few Thoughts on the Influence of Classical and Byzantine Poetry on the Profane Poems of Ioannes Mauropous

Claudio De Stefani

μόνους φέρων δίδωμι τοῖς λόγων φίλοις,  
ὥς γεῦμα μικρὸν δαψιλοῦς ἀνθοσμίου·  
οἷς ἡδονὴ γένοιτο ταῦτα μετρία,  
κόρος δ' ἀπέστω καὶ μέθη καὶ ναυτία

(Mauropous, L 1.28–31)

ἀλλ' ἐξ ἐκάστου σμικρὸν ἐξάγω μέρος,  
ὅσον ἀπογεῦσαι· τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν εἰ θέλοι  
τυχεῖν τις ἀπάντων καὶ μετασχεῖν εἰς κόρον,  
ἴστω γε ταῦτα κατ' ἀγορὰν ζητητέα.

(Agathias, AP 4.3.38–41)

Three scholars, above all, deserve an honourable mention for their studies of Ioannes Mauropous' poetry: Johannes Bollig, Paul de Lagarde and Rosario Anastasi. As is well known, Bollig, a Jesuit and paleographer, and de Lagarde, an orientalist and biblicist, published in 1882 a critical edition of the whole corpus of this Byzantine bishop and man of letters – with the exception of his religious hymns, a few more profane texts and two further speeches.<sup>1</sup> Anastasi produced a host of valuable articles, with the aim of preparing a new critical edition of Mauropous' poems. For this purpose he also published an Italian translation of the texts edited by Bollig and de Lagarde.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, Anastasi died prematurely in 1989: his notes towards a new edition have, as far as I know, been lost.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul de Lagarde (ed.), *Iohannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in Codice Vaticano 676 supersunt* (Göttingen, 1882). For the two speeches not contained in *Vat. gr.* 676, see Francesco D'Aiuto, *Tre canoni di Giovanni Mauropode in onore di santi militari* (Rome, 1994), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Rosario Anastasi, *Giovanni Mauropode metropolita di Euchaita. Canzoniere* (Catania, 1984).

## Textual Criticism

Analysis must therefore still be based on Bollig and de Lagarde's text, which contains about one hundred poems. A few more poems have been added to this main corpus: six published by Leo Sternbach,<sup>3</sup> one by Silvio G. Mercati,<sup>4</sup> one by Ioannes and Alkibiades Sakkelion,<sup>5</sup> and one by Karpozelos.<sup>6</sup> Maupous' authorship of the two poems edited by the Sakkelions and Karpozelos has been questioned,<sup>7</sup> but stylistic reasons (among other things) lead me to think that the author is indeed Maupous (see below). Of the poems edited by Sternbach none can be attributed to Maupous with certainty.<sup>8</sup> Apart from an observation on v. 1, I do not deal here with the poem on grammar edited by Reitzenstein, which, as far as size is concerned, is actually his longest poetic work (470 dodecasyllables).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Leo Sternbach, 'Appendix critica de Ioanne Euchtaitensi', *Eos*, 4 (1897): pp 156–163.

<sup>4</sup> Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, 'Presunti giambi di Demetrio Triclinio sulla festa dei tre gerarchi Basilio, Gregorio Nazianzeno e Giovanni Crisostomo', in Silvio Giuseppe Mercati and Augusta Acconcia Longo (eds), *Collectanea Byzantina* (2 vols, Bari, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 534–535.

<sup>5</sup> Ioannes Sakkelion and Alkibiades I. Sakkelion, *Κατάλογος τῶν χειρογράφων τῆς Ἐθνικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης τῆς Ἑλλάδος* (Athens, 1892), pp. 184–185. On some textual corruptions of this poem, see below. This text is most interesting: it is a celebration of the church of St George at Manganon, with the avowed aim of celebrating Konstantinos IX, Zoe and Theodora; another poem on this subject is found in the corpus of Christophoros Mitylenaios (K 95). Maupous' poem vaguely recalls, in some phrases, inscriptions on Byzantine churches (for instance, SS. Sergius and Bacchus, the monastery of Constantine Lips, and so on); a passage of the poem might have been inspired by the anonymous lines which were still read at that time on St Polyuktos: the emperor ἡγειρεν, ἐξήνθησεν εἰς κάλλος ξένον, / εἰς θαῦμα μείζον τῶν Σολομῶντος δόμων (10–11) like Anicia Iouliana σοφὴν παρέλασσαν αἰδομένου Σολομῶνος, / νηὶν ἀναστήσασα θεηδόχον (AP 1. 10. 48–49): see Mary Whitby, 'The Vocabulary of Praise in Verse Celebration of 6th-Century Building Achievements: AP 2.398.406, AP 1.10 and Paul the Silentiary's Description of St Sophia', in Domenico Accorinti and Pierre Chuvin (eds), *Des Géants à Dionysos. Mélanges de mythologie et de poésie grecques offerts à Francis Vian* (Alessandria, 2003), pp. 601–606.

<sup>6</sup> Apostolos Karpozelos, *Συμβολή στη μελέτη τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ ἔργου τοῦ Ἰωάννη Μαυρόποδος* (Ioannina, 1982), pp. 71–74.

<sup>7</sup> The poem published by Sakkelion and Sakkelion does not actually bear Maupous' name, but comes immediately before his famous lines on his house (L 47): the editors attributed the lines to Psellos; Silvio Giuseppe Mercati proposed Maupous as the author: 'Un testament inédit en faveur de Saint-Georges des Manganes', *REB*, 6 (1948): p. 36 = *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1, p. 54.

<sup>8</sup> See Marc Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 2003), pp. 297–301.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Reitzenstein, *M. Terentius Varro und Johannes Maupous von Euchaita* (Leipzig, 1901), pp. 4–18. On this work see Andrew R. Dyck, 'John Maupous of Euchaita and the 'Stoic Etymologikon'', *JÖB*, 43 (1993): pp. 113–140.

Bollig and de Lagarde's edition was an important achievement, quickly produced in just one year.<sup>10</sup> Though based on only one manuscript, *Vat. gr.* 676 (= V),<sup>11</sup> the text of the poems seems to be transmitted in a correct way; indeed, de Lagarde did not obelize any passages, and there are (it seems) very few passages which need emendation: the passages where we need only to correct typographical errors or modify punctuation are not to be considered real corruptions;<sup>12</sup> among the contributions which aimed at bettering the text of Bollig and de Lagarde I wish to mention an acute article by Pitsinelis.<sup>13</sup> The reason for the (alleged) soundness of Mauropous' text should be chiefly attributed to the fact that V, the oldest manuscript, is datable to the end of the eleventh–beginning of the twelfth century,<sup>14</sup> that is, close to the (hypothetical)

<sup>10</sup> Paul de Lagarde was asked by Johannes Bollig to edit the contents of the Vatican MS at the beginning of 1881 (see p. iii of his edition).

<sup>11</sup> I have checked on microfilm against the edition of Bollig and de Lagarde the readings of V that I deal with in the course of this article.

<sup>12</sup> In v. 37 of the poem edited by Karpozelos, *Συμβολή, ἥ καὶ κατωτέρω με τάξον, οὐ θέμις, read οὐ*. Other minor changes: at L 13.2–3 *μήπως ταράξης τὴν καλὴν συνουσίαν / καὶ ζημιώσης κόσμον ἐνθέους λόγους*. I would prefer to write *κόσμον, ἐνθέους λόγους*, in order to make it clear that ἐ. λ. is apposition (also V has a comma after *κόσμον*); at L 78.2 write *κάμπ<τ>ουσιν* (which is V's reading); at L 91.20 the comma after *διάρμα* (already present in V) should be cancelled: the passage (vv. 13–21) is difficult and needs explanation: *πέζῃ βαδίζω, πεζὼν ὦν ζῶον φύσει, / πᾶσιν μὲν οὐκ ἀποπτος ὡς ἐκ τῶν ἄνω, / πολλοῖς δὲ καὶ κάτωθεν ὦν ἐγνωσμένος, / ὃ μείζον οἶδα μᾶλλον εἰς εὐδοξίαν, / ὅταν τις αὐτὸς ἐκ ταπεινοῦ χωρίου / πρὸς ὕψος ἐκτείνοιτο καὶ δοκῇ μέγας / ὥσπερ κολοσσός, / μῆκος οἰκεῖον φέρων, / καὶ μηδὲν εἰς διάρμα, χρήζων τοῦ τόπου. / ὅσοι δὲ κομπάζουσι βαθμοῖς καὶ θρόνοις, κτλ.* As line 21 shows, the *τόπος* alluded to is the *βαθμός* (both the physical step and the metaphorical *βαθμός* of clerical hierarchy): the poet says that he does not need a step to rise; he just does it by his virtue; *καὶ μηδὲν εἰς διάρμα χρήζων τοῦ τόπου* means 'not needing a place for any rising' or 'not needing at all a place for rising'. At L 91.24 a full stop at the end of the line should be added (V has a stop).

<sup>13</sup> Georgios M. Pitsinelis, 'Προτεινόμεναι διορθώσεις εἰς ἐπιγράμματα Ἰωάννου τοῦ Μαυρόποδος', *EEBS*, 50 (1999–2000): p. 269 deals with five passages in the work of Mauropous. Apart from the correction of a misprint in the title of L 7, he proposes modifications in the punctuation, such as those which I proposed in the previous note, and a couple of emendations. He is certainly right in eliminating the comma in L 7.10; no less correct is his interpolation at L 2.6–7, which thus becomes: *'καὶ πᾶς θεὸς σάρξ; ποῦ τὸ θαῦμα καὶ πόθεν;'* / τὸ θαῦμα ποῦ; βάδιζε σὺν τοῖς ποιμέσιν. In L 21.6 he is probably right in reading *τέγῃ*. In just one case I am not totally sure that his emendation hits the nail on the head, viz. at L 9.10–11 *ἡ χεὶρ δὲ ναρκᾷ, καὶ παρειμένα τρέμει, / πλευρὰν φλέγουσαν ψηλαφὰν ὠρμημένη*, where Pitsineles wants to read *παρειμένη*, which at first sight looks like an obvious correction: but *παρειμένα* might be an adverbial neuter, like L 54.90–91 *δεινὸν ὅμα Ἰοργοῦς ἀγρίας / ... βλέψειεν ἡγριωμένα* (although I concede that with verbs which mean 'to look at' adverbial neuters are common enough).

<sup>14</sup> Robert Devreesse, *Codices Vaticani Graeci*, tomus III. *Codices* 604–866 (Vatican City, 1950), p. 130. V is written in a most clear *ductus*; moreover, de Lagarde relied on the collations of a giant of paleography, Wilhelm Studemund; therefore, I think, a future editor will not find many faults in de Lagarde's reproduction of V and his main work will be the identification of Mauropous' sources (a task which de Lagarde accomplished only partially).

autograph of the poet;<sup>15</sup> moreover, Mauropous himself carefully organized (and, therefore, corrected) his corpus (see poem 1), including poems, letters, and speeches, as Anastasi demonstrated.<sup>16</sup> The organization of the poems and the likely chronological dating of the corpus were also investigated by Anastasi.<sup>17</sup>

Unlike the poems edited by Bollig and de Lagarde, the one text published by the Sakkelions was edited in a very uncritical way, and shows some undeniable corruptions. As I said, the Sakkelions proposed to identify the author of the verses as Psellos, whereas Silvio Giuseppe Mercati maintained they were by Mauropous. I remark that Mercati's view can be further supported by the fact that they contain some phrases occurring in other poems by Mauropous<sup>18</sup> – which tallies with the fact that Mauropous repeats himself quite often;<sup>19</sup> and we may add that, if the verses published by the Sakkelions are

<sup>15</sup> This was pointed out by Nigel G. Wilson, 'Books and Readers in Byzantium', in *Byzantine Books and Bookmen. A Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium* (Washington, D.C., 1975), pp. 12–13. Wolfram Hörandner, 'Miscellanea epigrammatica', *JÖB*, 19 (1970): p. 110 published the collation of a manuscript from the Marciana (fourteenth century) which contains some poems by Mauropous already edited by Bollig and de Lagarde. None of the new readings are better than the corresponding readings of V: in fact, they seem simply to be mistakes or banalizations. In L 12.6 the Marcian MS offers an alternative text which is correct, but stylistically much worse than V; at L 10.17 τύποις διδάσκει, τὴν ἀλήθειαν σέβων it reads σέβειν, which makes the style a little more fluent, and might be a correct reading (but, more probably, is just a syntactical banalization); in L 14.4 Hörandner lists φθέγγεται among the different readings, but this is also what L prints.

<sup>16</sup> Rosario Anastasi, 'Il 'canzoniere' di Giovanni di Euchaita', *SicGymn*, 22 (1969): p. 117. On the refined organization of Mauropous' corpus see Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, pp. 62–65.

<sup>17</sup> Anastasi, 'Il 'canzoniere'', *passim*. On the (possible) influence of Konstantinos of Rhodes on the first poems of the Bollig and de Lagarde corpus, see below.

<sup>18</sup> τὸ θαῦμα τῆς γῆς (v. 1) can be compared with L 55.40 and L 57.2 τῆς γῆς τὸ θαῦμα (cf. below); τὸ τερπνὸν ὠράϊσμα τῶν ἀνακτόρων (v. 2) is quite similar to a passage of the poem published by Karpozelos, *Συμβολή*, vv. 16–17: τὸ φαιδρὸν ὠράϊσμα τῶν ἀνακτόρων, / τὸ τερπνὸν ὠράϊσμα τῆς σκηπτουχίας; for ὁ Χριστὸν αὐτὸν ἔνδον ἐν ψυχῇ φέρων (15), see L 22.1 ὁ ζῶντα Χριστὸν ἐν μέσῃ ψυχῇ φέρων (note also L 71.3 τὸ πρὸς σέ φίλτρον οἶον ἐν ψυχῇ φέρω); for σὺν τῇ συλλέκτρῳ νῦν ἀνάσσει τοῦ γένους (v. 16), see L 55.10 ἀλλ' ὦ μεγίστη κυρία τοῦ νῦν γένους; for νίκας, τρόπαια, καὶ χρόνων μῆκος νέμους (24) see L 64.5 νίκην ἀεὶ νέμουσα τῷ στεφφφόρῳ. Finally, one might add that the tone of τοῦ φωτολαμποῦς μάρτυρος Γεωργίου (v. 4) vaguely recalls L 55.7 τῆς κοσμολαμποῦς πανσελήνου λαμπάδος.

<sup>19</sup> For example, from the poem edited by Karpozelos, *Συμβολή*, vv. 22–23: τούτοις ἅπανιν ἴσος εἰμὶ τῷ χρόνῳ, / ὁ τοῖς λόγοις ἄνισος ὢν καὶ τοῖς τρόποις and L 40.3 τὸ πῶμα κοινόν, ἀλλ' ἄνισος ὁ χρόνος; furthermore (a sound echo) L 1.29 ὡς γεῦμα μικρὸν δαψιλοῦς ἀνδοσμίου and L 29.7 εἰ δ' ἔργον εἶχε, ζήμιας παγκοσμίου (and L 30.2 πλήρες ταμεῖον δαψιλοῦς μοχθηρίας); L 2.28 χαράς τὰ πάντα μεστὰ καὶ θυμηδίας and L 21.1 ἰδοῦ, τί τερπνὸν ἢ γέμον θυμηδίας; L 7.10 φροῦδοι μαθηταὶ καὶ πτερωτοὶ δ' οἰκέται and L 8.25 φρουροὶ μάταιοι, δυστυχεῖς ὑπηρέται and furthermore L 10.10 φίλοι μαθηταὶ καὶ τεκοῦσα παρθένο; L 31.41 θεοῦ κραταιὰν χεῖρα δόντος ὑψόθεν and L 93.37 φθάσας κραταιᾷ χειρὶ νῦν συλλαμβάνει (here applied to the emperor); L 31.67 μεθ' ὧν κρατεῖς τε καὶ κρατήσεις εἰς τέλος and L 54.77 ὅμως κατεκράτησεν ἡμῶν εἰς τέλος; L 31.56–57 τὸν καὶ βασιλεύσαντα καὶ στέψαντά σε / καὶ συμβασιλεύοντα καὶ σκέποντά σε and L 54.115–116 τὸν καὶ βασιλεύσαντα καὶ στέψαντά σε / καὶ

by him, this fact would *also* slightly support the authorship of those edited by Karpozelos, because there is a patent stylistic resemblance between the two poems.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the poem on St George at Mangana shows a few phrases which seem to be taken from Konstantinos of Rhodes, whose poem on The Holy Apostles plays a conspicuous part among the works of previous Byzantine poets imitated by Mauropous, as we shall see.

But let us now examine the passage of the poem which I consider to be corrupted. I refer to vv. 25–26:

οἷς (*scil.* βασιλεῦσι), Χριστέ σῶτερ, παμβασιλεῦ τῶν ὅλων,  
 νίκας, τρόπαια, καὶ χρόνων μῆκος νέμοις,  
 καὶ πρὸς τὸ μέλλον τῆς βασιλείας κλήρους, 25  
 ᾧ μήτηρ δυσωπεῖ παντάνασσα Παρθένος,  
 ὑπὲρ λόγον Σέ τὸν θεάνθρωπον Λόγον  
 τεκοῦσα καὶ φέρουσα νῦν ἐν ἀγκάλαις κτλ.

At the end of the text the poet asks Christ to glorify the reign of Konstantinos IX, Zoe and Theodora; he then mentions other allies of the emperor, the Virgin (and St George and other martyrs). Corrupted are κλήρους (v. 25) and almost certainly v. 26, which is hypermetric. In the first case there is a long vowel at the penultimate element of the verse; as to v. 26, the corruption lies probably in the word μήτηρ, maybe on account of the following παντάνασσα Παρθένος.

Were it not for the quantity of the penultimate element, v. 25 would be sound, because it makes sense: πρὸς τὸ μέλλον is notoriously a single phrase: 'in the future' – indeed, the verse refers to paradise: the poet asks Christ to grant the sovereigns victories and a long life, and in the future (viz. after death) a share of paradise (βασιλεία).

On the contrary, the meaning of δυσωπεῖ is not quite clear. I do not think that the verb here would mean 'entreats', which is, to be sure, a very common sense of it, especially

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συμβασιλεύοντα καὶ σκέποντά σε; L 54.40 καλῶς στρέφοντα τοῦ κράτους τὰς ἡνίας, and L 55.31 ἢ συμμεριζῇ τοῦ κράτους τὰς ἡνίας and L 31.37 ἀλλ' ἐκ θεοῦ σχὼν τοῦ κράτους τὰς ἡνίας.

<sup>20</sup> I do not concern myself with the delicate problem of the chronological difficulties this poem raises, and which led authoritative scholars to doubt Mauropous' authorship (see Paul Gautier, review of Karpozelos, *REB*, 38 (1980): p. 310; Rosario Anastasi, review of Karpozelos, *BZ*, 75 (1982): pp. 355–356 and Alexander Kazhdan, 'Some Problems in the Biography of John Mauropous. II', *Byz*, 65 (1995): p. 65). Anastasi, Mauropous, *Canzoniere*, p. vi questioned Mauropous' authorship on account of the monotonous presence of caesura B5 which does not alternate, he said, with B7 (as usually in Mauropous): this is not entirely true, because not a few verses have B7. Instead, what strikes me is the unusually frequent presence of proparoxytone words before B5 (16 %: see the percentages of Paul Maas, 'Der byzantinische Zwölfsilber', *BZ*, 12 (1903): p. 294 = *Kleine Schriften* (Munich, 1973), pp. 258–259): a survey of the first ten poems of Bollig and de Lagarde (272 lines) gives a very different percentage, 9 per cent. Then there is an oxytone at a verse end (verse 27), which, apart from the metrical difficulty, does not seem corrupted. We should envisage the possibility that, if by Mauropous, this poem was a rather hasty work: after all, the poet did not include it in the anthology of his verses edited by Bollig and de Lagarde.

in Byzantine literature, but not very consistent with the sentence.<sup>21</sup> I have the impression that here it could mean ‘to disapprove’ *vel quid simile* (cf. LSJ s.v. II. 2). In any case, the dative  $\phi$  is quite unlikely.<sup>22</sup> I would propose:

καί, πρὸς τὸ μέλλον, τῆς βασιλείας κλέος·  
ὃ μὴ δυσωπεῖ παντάνασσα Παρθένος, κτλ. 25

We might suppose that  $\mu\eta$  was mistaken for the abbreviation of  $\mu\eta\tau\eta\rho$ , on account of what follows; as to the ending of 25, see for example, Philes, *Carm.* 191. 101: κλέος λάβοις ἄφθαρτον εἰς Ἑδὲμ τόπον.<sup>23</sup>

The text published by Karpozelos is more correct, because the editor emended a few evident errors in the manuscript. In just one case we could perhaps improve the text (v. 39):

ὡς ἂν κἀγὼ σοι τοὺς ἐμοὺς δείξω τρόπους,  
εἰ πιστὸς εἰμὶ τῶν φύλαξ προσταγμάτων.

τῶν φύλαξ προσταγμάτων is possible, though the separation of the article is unusual: we are entitled to propose, I think, σῶν (Mauropous is addressing the emperor), on account of L 82.8 τῶν σῶν δὲ σεπτῶν, δέσποτα, προσταγμάτων.<sup>24</sup>

As I said, the poems transmitted by V and edited by Bollig and de Lagarde give an overall impression of soundness. One case that, if I am correct, needs emendation, belongs to the epigram in which Mauropous announces that he has regained his house, L 48. 16–18:

καὶ θαῦμα τὴν ἄπιστον εὐκίνησίαν,  
ναὶ τὴν ἄπιστον! ἦν ἐκινήθην, ἔχω,  
οὕτως θεοῦ στέφοντος οἷς οἶδε τρόποις κτλ.

<sup>21</sup> With the sense of ‘entreat’ *δυσωπέω* is usually constructed with the infinitive or simply with the accusative: σὲ δυσωπῶ ‘I entreat you’.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Suidae lexicon*, ed. A. Adler (5 vols, Stuttgart, 1928–1938), δ 1677 *δυσωπῶ* αἰτιατικῇ. ἱκετεύω. *δυσωπῶ* καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρακαλῶ καὶ τοῦ ἐντρέπομαι. κτλ.

<sup>23</sup> Manuel Philes, *Carmina*, ed. E. Miller, *Manuelis Philae Carmina ex codicibus Escorialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis* (2 vols, Paris, 1855–1857), vol. 1, p. 95. In theory, κράτος would also be a possible alternative: see W 20.5 τῆς βασιλείας κράτος (also at the end of the verse). But I think that it refers to the Kingdom of Heaven, so κλέος seems to me to be more likely (it is also paleographically a little closer to κλήρους than κράτος).

<sup>24</sup> I propose this correction with much caution, because Mauropous sometimes employs hyperbaton (as here): see cf. L 67.1 κοινὸς τριῶν εἰς φιλιτάτων οὗτος τάφος.

Verse 16 looks to me syntactically incomprehensible; we should perhaps read:

ναὶ θαυμαστὴν ἄπιστον εὐκινήσιαν,  
ναὶ τὴν ἄπιστον! ἦν ἐκινήθην, κτλ.

ναί is quite often mistaken for καί in the transmission of many a classical text: for a few Byzantine instances, see Theodoros Prodromos' *Katomyomachia*<sup>25</sup> 227 ναὶ δὴ γένοιτο, where the majority of manuscripts reads ναὶ δὴ and DK καὶ δὴ, Man. Phil. *Carm.* 83. 16–17 ναὶ καθάπαξ ἄψευστε, ναὶ πῆξις λόγων, / καὶ βάθρον ἐστὼς ὑπὸ μοχλοῖς πρακτέων,<sup>26</sup> where Miller remarked: 'Fort. ναὶ pro καί' and *Carm.* 30. 18 καὶ θάλλπε ῥιγοῦν ἐξ ἀφῆς τὸ σαρκίον (Miller: 'Fort. ναὶ θάλλπε').<sup>27</sup> Such emphatic repetitions of ναὶ in (at least) two verses are rather common: see for example (even more exaggerated) Manasses' *Hodoeporicon* 1. 334–335 ναὶ ναί, γενοίμην ὑπὸ τὰς σὰς ἀγκάλας / ναὶ ναί, γενοίμην ὑπὸ τὴν πτέρυγά σοι.<sup>28</sup>

### The Presence of Classical Literature in Mauropous: A Few Points

A few words on Mauropous' use of classical sources. Already de Lagarde in the margins of his edition pointed out some *loci*, classical as well as biblical, imitated by the poet. The presence of ancient sources in his poetry is certainly remarkable: the two parallel passages of Mauropous and Agathias which I quoted at the beginning of this article, both proems of a collection of epigrams, are meant to show symbolically the extent of the learning of the metropolitan of Euchaita and his desire to imitate (or even compete with) his ancient predecessors.

Of course, the influence of patristic literature permeates his verses perhaps even more: on the whole, whenever a phrase reflects both a patristic and a profane classical passage, the Christian *locus* seems to be a more likely source of the Byzantine text than the pagan one. This can be exemplified in L 99. 6–8, the last poem of the corpus. Mauropous complains that the διόρθωσις of his works cost him a great deal of trouble, but he hopes that he will be gratefully remembered by his readers.

ἀλλ' οἱ τρυφῶντες ἐν πόνοις ἀλλοτρίοις  
καὶ ταῖς ἐμαῖς πλέοντες εὐδία ζάλαις,  
πρὸς κύριον μέμνησθε τοῦ κεκτηκότος.

<sup>25</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, *Katomyomachia*, ed. H. Hunger, *Der byzantinische Katz-Mäuse-Krieg: Theodoros Prodromos, Katomyomachia* (Graz/Vienna/Cologne, 1968).

<sup>26</sup> Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 261.

<sup>27</sup> Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 2, p. 72.

<sup>28</sup> Konstantinos Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, ed. Konstantin Horna, 'Das Hodoiporikon des Konstantin Manasses', *BZ*, 13 (1904): pp. 313–355, henceforth cited as *Hodoep.*



This is the ending of the brief text. The only remarkable expression in the whole poem is *πλέοντες εὔδια*, which recalls similar expressions where *εὔδια* is used adverbially: Oppianos *Halieutica* 1. 62 *εὔδια πορφύροντα*, which is the likely source of Agathias (*AP* 10.14.1. *εὔδια ... πορφύρεται*) and Theaetetos Scholastikos (*AP* 10.16.8 *εὔδια πεπταμένης*).<sup>29</sup> But the source of Maupous is surely [Joh. Chrys.] *Paenit.* 2 (PG 59. 759) *πολλάκις ἡρέμα σοι τὰ τῆς δίνης εὔδια πλέοντι πείθουσι χαλάσαι περὶ τὸν πλοῦν τὸ ἱστίον*, the only other instance of this phrase. *εὔδια* might be an adverbially used neuter or just the object of *πλέοντες*; in any case, the source is a patristic text. Other instances will be produced further.

Maupous employs a variety of styles, a proof of his versatility and competence as a man of letters: he can entertain the reader with either a lively ‘mimetic’ tone (which he often adopts in his descriptions of works of art [2; 3], but which is by no means confined to these: see 92), or a solemn rhetoric style, which he likes to use in his funerary poems and in his lavish praises of the royal family, yet he is also able to create a sort of ‘polemic’ or ‘political’ style – I will briefly deal with this subject at the end of this paper.

The *epitymbia* are instructive about how Maupous treats more ‘tragic’ topics, especially 36 (for Theodoros Proteuon)<sup>30</sup> and 37 (for Ioannes the chartophylax). In a provisional apparatus of *fontes*, I noted down the passages of biblical and classical texts which seem to me to be the most likely sources:

### 36

Ἐν ἦν τὸ κοσμοῦν τὸν ταλαίπωρον βίον,  
ὁ νεκρὸς οὗτος, πρὶν νεκρὸς πεφηνέναι,  
ἕως ἔτι ζῶν, φῶς ὑπῆρχε τοῦ κόσμου,  
ἕως ὑπὲρ γῆς εἶχε τὴν λαμπηδόνα,  
ὕφ’ ἧς ὅλην ἡὔγαζε τὴν οἰκουμένην  
ὁποῖα φαιδρὸς λύχνος αὐχμηρὸν τόπον·

5

*Note:* Joh. 1:10 *ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν* || Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 2. 1. 77. 1 *τῷ τάλαιπῶρῳ βίῳ* || 3. Ev. Matth. 5:14 *ὁμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου*, Ev. Joh. 8:12 *ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου* || 5. Ev. Joh. 1:9 *φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον* || || 6. 2 Petr. 1:19 *ὡς λύχνος φαίνοντι ἐν αὐχμηρῷ τόπῳ* et Leon. Tar. *AP* 7. 295. 7 *λύχνος ὁποῖα*.

<sup>29</sup> See also Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 1. 2. 2. 225 *εὔδια κυμαίνοντος*.

<sup>30</sup> Identified by Gautier, ‘Review’, p. 310.



καὶ ταῦτα μὲν χθές. νῦν δὲ τί; σκιάς ὄναρ. 40  
 τὰ πάντα φροῦδα, πάντα φάσμα φασμάτων,  
 φανέν τι μικρὸν καὶ παρελθὸν αὐτίκα.  
 ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν, ταῦτα μὲν ζῇ καὶ πάλιν·  
 οὐ γὰρ πέφυκεν ἀρετὴ θνήσκειν ὅλως.  
 ἔχει δὲ τὸν χοῦν ἢ φθορὰ πάλιν μόνον 45  
 ἀφ' ἧς ὑπέστη καὶ πρὸς ἣν ὑποστρέφει.  
 οὐκ οὖν τι δεινὸν ἔσχεν ὁ κρυβεῖς τάφω,  
 ἀλλ' ὁ στερηθεὶς τοῦ καλοῦ τούτου βίος.

Notes: 47 οὐκουν V

40. Pind. Pyth. 8. 95–96 τί δέ τις; τί δ' οὐ τις; σκιάς ὄναρ / ἄνθρωπος. cf. Addenda Cougny iii 256b  
 ὡς ἄνθος, ὡς ἄγρωστις, ὡς σκιάς ὄναρ, al. || 41 Eur. Andr. 1219 φροῦδα πάντ' ἐκείνα; Jo. Chrys. Exp.  
 in Ps. 120. 1 (PG 55. 344) τὰ παρὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ... πάντα φροῦδα, etcetera || 45–46. LXX. Gen.  
 3:19 || 47. S. fr. 557. 5 Radt τὸν ἐν τάφῳ κρυφθέντα πρὸς τὸ φῶς ἄγειν, App. Cougny 2. 754. 1  
 κρυβεῖς λίθῳ\*, App. Cougny 1. 371. 2 = Guillou 100 τάφῳ δὲ κρυφθείς.

37

Πένθους ὁ καιρὸς· συμφορᾶς τὸ χωρίον·  
 καὶ δυστυχοῦσιν ἀρετὴ τε καὶ λόγοι·  
 τὸ σφῶν γὰρ αὐτοῖς οἴχεται μέγα κράτος,  
 ἤδη πεσόντος (ὡς ὄραξ) Ἰωάννου,  
 Ἰωάννου πεσόντος (οἰμοί) τοῦ πάνυ. 5  
 ὦ καρδιά, σείσθητι καὶ θραύσθητί μοι,  
 πλήττοντος οὕτω καιρίαν σε τοῦ λόγου.  
 ἀνὴρ σοφὸς τέθηκεν· ὦ τῆς ζημίας.  
 ἀνὴρ δίκαιος, εὐλαβής· φεῦ τοῦ πάθους.  
 ὁ χαρτοφύλαξ· ὦ στυγνῶν ἀκουσμάτων. 10  
 ὁ χαρτοφύλαξ, οὐ τὸ πρὶν μέγα κλέος,  
 τὸ καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐρανὸν τρίτον φθάνον  
 καὶ τὴν ἅπειρον γῆν ὅλην περιτρέχον,  
 εἰ καὶ βραχεῖ νῦν συγκαλύπτεται τάφῳ.

Note: 1. De carminis initio vide infra. Jo. Chrys. Hom. 55 (56). 5 in Mt. (PG 58. 545) πένθους  
 ὁ παρὼν καιρὸς, Hom. 60 (59). 4 in Jo. (PG 59. 332) πένθους γὰρ ὁ παρὼν καιρὸς καὶ θρήνων καὶ  
 ὀδυρμῶν, etcetera || 6 Greg. Naz. Or. 16. 10 καὶ σύ, καρδιά, σείσθητι καὶ σαλευθήτι, etcetera ||  
 LXX Ezek. 21:12 θραυσθήσεται πᾶσα καρδιά, 21:20 ὅπως θραυσθῇ ἡ καρδιά || 9. Ev. Luc 2:25 ὁ  
 ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος καὶ εὐλαβής || 12. 2 Corinth. 12:2 ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ (coll. de Lagarde) |  
 Hom. Il. 8. 192, Od. 9. 20 κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει, Od. 8. 74, 19. 108 κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἱκάνει, confer  
 et Christ. Mityl. 27. 33 τίνος δὲ φήμῃ μέχρι αἰθέρος φθάνει ...; nec non et Joh. Geom. Carm. 95. 4  
 (306.4 Cramer = PG 106.942) πίστις Μιχαὴλ μέχρι καὶ πλόου φθάνει (quem Christ. Mityl. imitatus  
 est?) || 14 App. Cougny 2. 748. 5 ὁ λίθος οὗτος συγκαλύπτεται τάφῳ κτλ.

As can be seen, the main sources are biblical or patristic,<sup>31</sup> but there also are recollections of classical *loci*. L 36 begins in a characteristically solemn way: it clearly alludes to the beginning of St John's Gospel;<sup>32</sup> the imitation of the Gospels, by the way, may account for the metrical licence κόσμου (3);<sup>33</sup> Mauropous apparently wanted to introduce the key word of the hymn to Logos (v. 10 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν κτλ.).

As to the phrases deriving from 'classical' authors, in one case Mauropous reproduced an expression he had apparently found in an epigram by Leonidas of Tarentum; that Leonidas was one of his two sources is plausible, because the expression does not occur elsewhere – moreover, it belongs to a funerary epigram (AP 7. 295. 7):

ἀλλ' ἔθαν' ἐν καλύβῃ σχοινίτιδι, λύχνος ὅποια,  
τῷ μακρῷ σβεσθείς ἐν χρόνῳ αὐτόματος.

Mauropous certainly changed the word order, in order to insert in the dodecasyllable the phrase which he had borrowed: for a similar word order in iambus see, for example, Lycophr. 74 ὅποια πόρκος.<sup>34</sup> Another echo of this passage of Leonidas might be seen at L 37.35 καὶ τὴν κάτω σβεσθεῖσαν ἔγνω λαμπάδα. On the other hand, the poet quoted almost verbally in the same line a passage of St John: it seems, therefore, that he blended together a biblical *locus* and a classical phrase. In the same way, at L 37.6 he 'contaminated' a biblical passage with Greg. Naz. (this is, I admit, less surprising).<sup>35</sup> If our analysis is correct, Mauropous imitated a phrase from a classical funerary text in order to dignify the style of his poem with an ancient parallel from a similar genre.

Two more kinds of imitation seem to point to a different, more subtle attitude: I mean the cases in which either the phrase alluded to was a very famous (almost proverbial) one, or one where the author himself mentioned his source.

<sup>31</sup> I think that Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 2.1. 77. 1 is the most probable source for the expression of 36. 1: note also that here too it is the *incipit* of a poem. The phrase already occurs in Soph. *OC* 91, Menander (several passages), and so on.

<sup>32</sup> Likewise, 35, another epitymbion, echoes other passages of St John: lines 7ff. οὐ γὰρ δίκαιον ἦν τὸ φῶς ὑπὸ σκότους / ἔτι κρατεῖσθαι, καὶ διαυγάζειν μάτην, / πάντων φιλοῦντων οὐ τὸ φῶς, τὸ δὲ σκότος.

<sup>33</sup> See, however, L 82. 3 ποῖα γὰρ ὠφέλεια κερδῆσαι κόσμον and the supplement by Maspero at Diosc. Aphrod. 10. 14 Fournet κέλευσον ὕδωρ ἐμβαλέσθαι τῷ [κόσμῳ]. The same obviously happens with proper names, which were traditionally treated as free from the rules of quantities (in all Byzantine poets). See for example E.M. van Opstall (ed.), *Jean Géomètre, Poèmes en hexamètres et en distiques elegiaques* (Leiden/Boston, 2008), p. 218.

<sup>34</sup> And 1429 Λοκρόν δ' ὅποια παῦρον ἀνθήσας ῥόδον.

<sup>35</sup> It should be pointed out that a very similar phrase is found in Geometres (ed. van Opstall) 263. 4 ἔσβετο οἷα λύχνος: I think that, also in the case of Geometres, we should infer the presence in the background of this epigram of the AP (with even more confidence than in Mauropous, since Geometres, as van Opstall demonstrated, quite often drew upon the *Anthology*). On the other hand, it is unlikely that Mauropous kept in mind the verse of Geometres, because his work is not among the Byzantine sources of the bishop, as we shall see.

The first case might be exemplified by L 36. 40, which I have just quoted: the ancient and almost proverbial σκιᾶς ὄναρ (already noticed by de Lagarde) was probably such a well-known motto, so famous that it might circulate independently from its original source, and that Mauropous could trust readers that they would identify it as a classical phrase. Indeed, it also appears elsewhere in Byzantine poetry: I have found it in Jacob of Bulgaria: ὄντως σκιᾶς ὄνειρος ἀνθρώπων βίος<sup>36</sup> and Philes, *Carm.* 198.25,<sup>37</sup> σκιᾶς ὄναρ, ἄνθρωπε, τὴν φύσιν κάλει. It should be remarked that this phrase is followed in 36 by another classical *iunctura* (which, however, Ioannes Chrysostomos exploited in some passages) and by φάσμα φασμάτων which apparently doesn't occur elsewhere, but clearly sounds biblical.<sup>38</sup> Once again we find classical echoes within a solid biblical (see the allusion to Genesis in lines 45–46) and patristic frame.

In the second case Mauropous explicitly tells his readers that he is employing an ancient phrase. Let us consider an example from the beginning of L 93:

Οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἀτρεκῆς οὗτος λόγος  
(ποιητικῶς γὰρ λάζομαι μῦθον πάλιν)

As de Lagarde had already seen, Mauropous alludes – at the very beginning of a poem, where poets traditionally resorted to ‘arte allusiva’ – to a famous fragment of Stesichorus (*PMGF* 192) which he had found in Plat. *Phaedr.* 243A. The reworking of the parallel is put at the beginning of the poem, which highlights the quotation and qualifies the contents of 93 as a ‘palinodic’ poem. Similarly, the beginning of L 81, Ὅναρ τὰ θνητὰ πάντα καὶ ματαιότης, alludes to the famous verse of LXX Eccl. 1:2 ματαιότης ματαιοτήτων, εἶπεν ὁ Ἐκκλησιαστής, ματαιότης ματαιοτήτων, τὰ πάντα ματαιότης, and aptly announces the contents of the poem, an ode on the vanity of life.<sup>39</sup>

Even from such a small survey, we may state that the presence of classical sources in Mauropous is, as was to be expected, undeniably relevant. On the one hand, he employs ancient phrases so as to call the attention of the readers to them by mentioning the source of the quotation or by putting it in a particular position, for instance, at the beginning of the poem; on the other hand, he now and then uses ancient literary phrases and expressions as ‘pearls’ with which he tried to embellish his style, without giving them any particular emphasis.

The presence of classic poetry in Mauropous can be roughly summed up as follows: he imitated passages of tragedy (especially Euripides); and there are indications that he has read the collections of epigrams.<sup>40</sup> As to Lycophron, a true tutelary deity of the

<sup>36</sup> Jacob of Bulgaria, ed. S.G. Mercati, in *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1, pp. 66–98, here p. 76 (op. III, v. 9).

<sup>37</sup> Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 360.

<sup>38</sup> The *vanitas vanitatum* which I will come to shortly.

<sup>39</sup> On the imitation of this biblical passage by Christophoros Mitylenaios, see below.

<sup>40</sup> Apart from the passages discussed above, see for example L 68.3–4 τίς πρὸς τοσούτους χεῖρας ὀπλίτας ἄροι; / τίς πρὸς φάλαγγα μαρτύρων στήσοι μάχην; and Meleag. AP 12. 147. 1–2 ἄρπασται τίς τ' ὅσσον ἐναίχμασσαι ἄγιος εἶναι;† / τίς τόσος ἀντάραι καὶ πρὸς Ἑρωτα μάχην;.

Byzantine poetry, there seem to me to be just a couple of vague recollections.<sup>41</sup> Like most of the Byzantine poets, Maupous had in mind the poetic work of Gregorios of Nazianzos: here I should confess that I did not identify systematically the passages in which Maupous imitated his great predecessor, apart from a few particular cases: *non omnia possumus omnes*.

### Some Echoes of Previous Byzantine Poets and Parallels with Contemporary Poetry

Previous and contemporary Byzantine poetry is also very present in the verses of Maupous. The identification of these echoes is a rather difficult task, which should be done *ex nihilo*, because Bollig and de Lagarde limited themselves to noting down in the margins just a few classical and biblical *loci*. It can at once be premised that Maupous does not seem to have been familiar with *all* his predecessors: in some cases, he might not have read their works; in other, it was the different genre, or the idiomatic language (or both), which probably led him to consider the poetry of his predecessors as incompatible with his own, polished, and so (apparently) 'natural', style. Also, eleventh-century poetical style seems to have become very different from that of the tenth century.<sup>42</sup> I will quote later the passages of which an imitation by Maupous seems to be rather certain.<sup>43</sup>

We are certainly not amazed to find Georgios Pisides among the authors imitated by Maupous: he was a classic, whose popularity among Byzantine poets was destined to last throughout the following century and beyond. The famous treatise by Psellos on Euripides and Pisides assures us that men of letters by the eleventh century *had* to be familiar with the latter's work. Likewise, it is not astonishing that the poem most frequently imitated by Maupous seems to be the *Hexaemeron*: the conspicuous number of manuscripts that transmit it testify to the fortune of that work.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> On the imitation of Lycophr. 33 at L 8.9, see Claudio De Stefani and Enrico Magnelli, 'Lycophron in Byzantine poetry (and prose)' in *Lycophron: éclats d'obscurité. Actes du colloque international de Lyon et Saint-Etienne 18–20 janvier 2007* (Saint-Etienne, 2009), p. 599. L 1.8, οὓς εἰς κενὸν κέκμηκα πολλάκις γράφων, reminds me of Lycophr. 139 τοιγὰρ ψαλᾶξεις ἐς κενὸν νευρᾶς κτύπον, but the resemblance might be fortuitous (this verse by Lycophron is certainly echoed by Mouzalon 765, see De Stefani and Magnelli, 'Lycophron', p. 608); L 90.8 αἶ μᾶλλον ἐκτίηκουσι σάρκας δεσπότην might echo Lycophr. 672 πείσει τακῆναι σάρκας ἀκμήνους βορᾶς.

<sup>42</sup> I am chiefly thinking of the *Chiliostichos Theologia* by Leon Choirosphaktes, filled with difficult and (sometimes) sesquipedalian compounds, or of some scoptic verses by Konstantinos Rhodios.

<sup>43</sup> All the 'echoes' of Byzantine authors quoted in the following pages were collected by simple reading: in order to find out the (possible) imitations, I tried to keep in mind the verses of Maupous as far as possible, but much could have escaped me. This research never made use of the TLG, so it cannot claim to be systematic.

<sup>44</sup> We might add that the manuscript tradition of the *Hexaemeron* is notoriously contaminated.

The excellent edition of Fabrizio Gonnelli<sup>45</sup> shows in the *apparatus fontium* a good deal of imitations by later poets, among whom Mauropous;<sup>46</sup> in the following pages I produce a few more echoes which can be added to Gonnelli's list. Let us begin with what I regard as the most outstanding example, the first verse of the etymological poem of Mauropous: Θεὸς κατάρχοι παντὸς ἔργου καὶ λόγου. It is a blatant imitation of the first verse (*et pour cause*) of the *Hexaemeron*:

Ὡ παντὸς ἔργου καὶ θεηγόρου λόγου  
καὶ γλώσσα καὶ νοῦς καὶ τροφή καὶ καρδιά,  
τὰ ρεῖθρα τῶν σῶν οὐρανοδρόμων λόγων, κτλ.<sup>47</sup>

It is not surprising that the first verse of such a famous work was fixed in the memory of Byzantine literary men: some years ago I pointed out a previously unnoticed reference to *Hexaem.* 1 in a late treatise;<sup>48</sup> the same echo is 'hidden' in another verse of Mauropous, L 93. 66:

παρ' οὐ μόνου δεῖ προσφυὲς ζητεῖν πέρας  
ἅπαντας ἡμᾶς παντὸς ἔργου καὶ λόγου,  
παντὸς σκοποῦ κτλ.

65

I do not think that the resemblance is fortuitous, because it is a relatively long phrase, and this same verse of Pisides is so conspicuously imitated in the etymological poem, as we have just seen.

The beginnings of two more poems by Mauropous seem to echo Pisides' *Hexaemeron*: Πένθους ὁ καιρὸς συμφορᾶς τὸ χωρίον (L 37.1) recalls *Hexaem.* 301 θέρους ὁ καιρὸς οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν ὅπως<sup>49</sup> and L 29.1–2: Τίς ὁ θρασυνθεὶς πρῶτος εἰπεῖν τοὺς λόγους / ἥκιστα

<sup>45</sup> Georgios Pisides, ed. F. Gonnelli, *Esamerone* (Pisa, 1998), henceforth cited as *Hexaem.*

<sup>46</sup> The most remarkable case, among the imitations noted by Gonnelli, is certainly *Hexaem.* 1824 κἄν ἐστιν ισχνόφωνος ἐξ ἀσιτίας, echoed by Mauropous in L 14.5 ἀλλ' ἐστιν ισχνόφωνος ἐξ ἀσιτίας.

<sup>47</sup> This imitation escaped both Gonnelli and the editor of the etymological poem, Reitzenstein. *Hexaem.* 2 was also imitated by Geometres: J. Cramer (ed.), *Anecdota graeca e codicis manuscriptis bibliothecae regiae Parisiensis* (Oxford, 1841), vol. 4, p. 276 (poem 9, 7) (=PG 106, 912), as Gonnelli pointed out: I add that v. 3 was imitated by Geometres in the same poem at v. 27 (Cramer 276.29 = PG 106.913) τὰ ρεῖθρα, ποῖα ρεῖθρα τῶν λόγων φράσοι; (to be added to the apparatus of Gonnelli, as well as the passages listed by Miller; see Philes, *Carmina*, vol. 1, p. 286).

<sup>48</sup> Claudio De Stefani, 'Adesp. trag. fr. 118b Sn.-K.', *MCr.* 29 (1994): pp. 153–154.

<sup>49</sup> Pisides' verse too, it should be pointed out, initiates a new section of the poem. In this same poem (L 37), Mauropous imitates another verse of Pisides: compare v. 17 βροντῶν μὲν ὥσπερ ἐκ νεφῶν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, and *Hexaem.* 61 ὁ πολλὰ βροντῶν ἐκ νεφῶν λοξοδρόμων (this imitation is already in the apparatus of Gonnelli).

τούτους ἀναγινωσκομένους recalls *Hexaem.* 546–547 ποῖον θρασυνδὲν τοῦ Σταγειρίτου στόμα / τοὺς τῆς χαλᾶζης ἐξερεύγεται λόγους.<sup>50</sup>

Another text also seems to begin with an imitation of Pisides – not of his longer poems, but of his epigrams, L 4.1: φρίξον, θεατά, τὴν ὀρωμένην θέαν, which recalls *Epigr.* 44. 1 φρίξον θεωρῶν οὐρανὲν ξένην τριβόν.<sup>51</sup>

I think that the extent of the influence of the *Hexaemeron* can be shown by the following case, where a passage of Pisides seems to have struck Mauropous' imagination on account of its rhetorical *agudeza*, so that he went so far as to imitate it twice. In two contiguous poems, Mauropous 'played' on the root of τιμή, creating an alliteration. At L 27.17 οἷς εἶχε, τιμᾶν τὴν ὑπέρτιμον θέλων, and, above all, at L 28.3–5:

ἐφεισάμην ἂν οὐδαμῶς ὡς τιμίου·  
ὡς τίμιον μᾶλλον δέ, σὺν προθυμίᾳ  
ἦνεγκα δῶρον προσφιλὲς τοῖς τιμίοις.

Like all Byzantine poets, Mauropous was fond of alliteration – we have other similar instances (also by means of itacism);<sup>52</sup> but here Mauropous was probably prompted to this play by his illustrious predecessor, *Hexaem.* 485–486:

τιμῆς βραχείας τοὺς ὑπερτίμους τρόπους,  
ὅλους προθύμους εἰς προδήκην στεμμάτων.

Other instances of imitations of the *Hexaemeron* are less sure, or at least less obvious.<sup>53</sup> As to the other works of Pisides, I cannot say with certainty that Mauropous drew

<sup>50</sup> Johannes Dräseke, 'Johannes Mauropus', *BZ*, 2 (1893): p. 488 n. 1 defined this phrase as 'schwungvoll', but this 'Schwung', we may now say, was already in the model.

<sup>51</sup> But one could also quote Konstantinos Rhodios: Emile Legrand, 'Description des oeuvres d'art et de l'Église des Saints Apôtres de Constantinople', *REG*, 9 (1896), henceforth cited as *Const. Rhod. Ss. App.*, v. 860 φρικτὸν θέαμα πάμπαν ἐξηρημένον (for such cases, in which the imitation of Pisides is joined to a recollection of Konstantinos of Rhodes, see below). For Philes see below. For the poems *De vanitate vitae* (*Van. Vit.*), *De expeditione persica* (*Exp. Pers.*), *De restoratione crucis* (*Rest. cruc.*), *In Alypium* (*Alyp.*), and his epigrams (*Epigr.*), I quote from the edition of Luigi Tartaglia (ed.), *Carmi di Giorgio di Pisidia* (Turin, 1998), who used the critical editions of previous scholars (Pertusi, Sternbach) in a few cases printing his own, different, text.

<sup>52</sup> See L 61. 11–12 χρησμός δὲ καινὸς οὐδαμῶς, κενὸς δ' ὅμως. / ἥρως δὲ δόξας, λῆρος εὐρέθης μόνον.

<sup>53</sup> The metaphor of L 47.11 οὗτος σὲ φεύγει σωφρονῶν ὡς δραπέτιν might come from *Hexaem.* 377–378 δραπέτου τινὸς δίκην / φεύγουσαν. The image of dizziness in contemplating God L 3. 15 ἄνω θεωρῶν, ὡς ἱλιγον ἐκφύγοι probably comes from a famous Pisidian passage, *Hexaem.* 1699 ἱλιγα πάσχω, indeed it occurs in the praise of the spider at Christ. Mityl. K 122.10, a notoriously 'Pisidian' poem: ἄρρητον εἰς ἱλιγον ἐμπίπτω λίαν *suppl.* Kurtz (*possis et τάλας*), and is found in other authors, always as a likely imitation of Pisides: Leo Choïrosphaktes, *Chiliostichos Theologia*, ed. I. Vassil (Berlin/New York, 2002), v. 120–121, Mouzalon 483). Though just one word, I have the impression that L 77. 2 ζῶον μὲν εὐδίσθον εἰς ἁμαρτίαν draws upon *Hexaem.* 1001 καὶ πλωτὸν

his inspiration from them – that he had read them, should be regarded as a plausible hypothesis. There are indeed certain resemblances between some of his verses and passages of *De vanitate vitae*,<sup>54</sup> *De expeditione persica*,<sup>55</sup> and (perhaps) *De restoratione crucis*.<sup>56</sup> I have already mentioned *Epigrammata*; a few more *loci* could be added.<sup>57</sup>

I have not found in Mauropous significant reminiscences of the most important poets who flourished after Pisides until Konstantinos of Rhodes (tenth century): but it is possible that I failed to see some parallels. In the *Iambi* of Theodoros Stoudites, there is one phrase that also occurs in Mauropous, but it can be regarded as generally belonging to poetic language, without implying any dependence of the metropolitan of Euchaita on the poems of his famous predecessor.<sup>58</sup> I have already mentioned the lack of affinities with Choerosphaktes' *Chiliostichos Theologia*.<sup>59</sup> No parallels with Mauropous are found in the anonymous epigrams edited by Browning from the *Bodl. Barocci* 50.<sup>60</sup>

With Konstantinos of Rhodes, a host of stylistic affinities between them can be gathered: one of the most evident parallels comes from the poem on the church

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*εὐόλισθον\** ἀνταίρει στόλον. Finally, L 36. 37 ἐμψυχος εἰκὼν ἀρετῆς ἦν καὶ τύπος seems to have been (rhythmically) inspired by *Hexaem.* 1526 ἄμορφος εἰκὼν\*, δυσδιάγνωστος θέα. If we add these cases to those already noticed by Gonnelli, we can see that the influence of the *Hexaem.* on Mauropous is by no means to be neglected.

<sup>54</sup> See L 91.22–23 οὗτοι κολοίων οὐδὲν εἰσι βελτίους / μέγα φρονούντων ἐν πετεροῖς ἀλλοτρίοις and *Van. vit.* 213 ὥσπερ κολοίων ἐκ πετερῶν ἀλλοτρίων. Possibly, the preceding verse, 91.21 ὅσοι δὲ κομπάζουσι βαθμοῖς καὶ θρόνοις also draws upon *Van. vit.* 186 ἄλλοις μὲν ἀρχαὶ καὶ θρόνοι καὶ βήματα (if so, Mauropous obviously changed the word order, because Pisides could still end his verse with a proparoxytonon).

<sup>55</sup> A very uncertain instance: L 93.60 καὶ τοῖς λογισμοῖς ἀσφαλῶς βεβηκέναι and *Exp. Pers.* 2. 349 λογισμὸν εἶχεν οὐδαμοῦ βεβηκότα.

<sup>56</sup> The resemblance is actually slight: L 36.26 νύκτωρ διαθλῶν ἐν προσευχαῖς ἀγρύπνοις and *Rest. cruc.* 28 λιταῖς, προσευχαῖς, δακρύοις, ἀγρυπνίαις.

<sup>57</sup> L 8. 17 ἄδην πατεῖ τύραννον ἀνθρωποφθόρον and *Epigr.* 40.1 Ἄδην πατήσας ἐξανέστης τοῦ τάφου. It can be added that the powerful (and baroque) image of *Hexaem.* 1783–1784 καὶ νεκρὸς ἄδης γίνεται παρ' ἐλπίδας / Πλούτων πενιχρὸς καὶ σφαγεὺς ἐσφαγμένος was imitated by Joh. Geom. *Carm.* 75, 1 (Cramer 300.13 = PG 106, 937) Ἄδης νεκροῦται (this passage should be added to the apparatus of Gonnelli).

<sup>58</sup> See L 89. 28 βρύουσα πᾶσαν ἡδονήν τε καὶ χάριν and Theodoros Stoudites, ed. Paul Speck, *Jamben auf verschiedene Gegenstände* (Berlin, 1968), 1.1: χάριν βρύουσιν θεῖαν ἐν τοῖς λειψάνοις. This is a phrase I have found elsewhere, in the works of poets later than Mauropous and who seem to have very little in common with him, like Nikolaos Kallikles, ed. R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi* (Naples, 1980), poem 18.12: λαμπὰς γὰρ ἡμῖν φῶς βρύουσα καὶ χάριν, or do not show any other correspondence with his work, like Nikephoros Gregoras: Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, 'Sulle poesie di Niceforo Gregora', in *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1, pp. 144–151, poem 4.2: βρύουσα ... χάριν. The similarity between L 9.1. Χριστός, μαθηταί and Theod. Stud. *Iamb.* 22.1 Sp. Χριστοῦ μαθηταί\* is probably fortuitous.

<sup>59</sup> This is understandable, on account of the philosophical-theological frame of Choerosphaktes' poem and of his almost γριφώδες style, quite unlike that of Mauropous.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Browning, 'An Unpublished Corpus of Byzantine Poems', *Byz.* 33 (1963): pp. 289–316.



of St George at Manganon edited by the Sakkelions, v. 12: εἰς δόξαν, εἰς καύχημα τῆς σκηπτουχίας, which is quite like Konstantinos' poem on the Church of the Apostles, v. 464 καὶ δόξα, καὶ καύχημα τῶν Ἀποστόλων.<sup>61</sup>

At L 10.8, καὶ χεῖρας ἐκτείνοντες ὡς πρὸς αἰθέρα, Mauropous borrowed a phrase (it is, actually, an entire verse) which Konstantinos was very fond of, see especially *Ss. App.* 618 καὶ χεῖρας ἐκτείνοντες εἰς τὸν ἄερα and further 45 τὴν χεῖρ' ἐπεκτείνοντα πρὸς<sup>62</sup> τὸν ἄερα, 155 τὴν χεῖρ' ἐπεκτείνουσα πρὸς τὸν ἄερα, 367 τὴν χεῖρ' ἐπεκτείνοντα πρὸς τὸν ἄερα.

A few more complex examples: it seems that Mauropous enjoyed blending his sources and it is (at least) possible that at L 74.4, ἀρχιστράτηγε τῶν ἄνω στρατευμάτων, he imitated Konst. Rhod. *Ss. App.* 755 πρὸς τὸν στρατηγὸν τῶν ἄνω στρατευμάτων: on the other hand, the vocative convinces me that he also recalled, in this very passage, Georg. Pisid. *Exp. Pers.* 3.385 ἄλλ', ὦ Στρατηγέ τῶν ἄνω καὶ τῶν κάτω (which probably Konstantinos Rhodios also bore in mind).

In some cases one gets the impression that the echoes of the poem of Konstantinos Rhodios are in a certain sense more 'rhythmical' than lexical: such imitations are more difficult to detect, and are, we must say, less certain; but they are interesting, because they demonstrate, I think, that reading the *Ss. App.* really was a crucial point in the development of Mauropous' style.<sup>63</sup>

A parallel of a different kind is the beginning of L 27.1–2: Σοὶ τοῦτο πλεκτὸν ἐξ ἀκηράτου στέφος / λειμῶνος, ὃ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω. These verses were recognized by de Lagarde as an almost literal quotation from Eur. *Hipp.* 73–74.<sup>64</sup> As a matter of fact, in the following verse (3), Mauropous pointed out to the readers that he was employing a sentence of a pagan author: both the fact that the imitation is at the beginning of a poem, and that Mauropous declared it explicitly,<sup>65</sup> belongs to a typical attitude of his towards classical *loci*, as we have already seen.

Now the Euripidean verses were also imitated by [Georg. Pisid.] *Carm.* 107.11–12 St: καὶ τῷ θεῷ προσήξεν ἐξ ἀκηράτου / τοῦ κοσμικοῦ λειμῶνος εὐανθές στέφος, a poem

<sup>61</sup> There is another passage in Mauropous' poem for which we might envisage an influence of Konstantinos Rhodios: ἡγειρεν, ἐξήνθησεν εἰς κάλλος ξένον (v. 10) recalls, for the first part of the verse, Konst. Rhod. *Ss. App.* 573 ἡγειρεν, ἐξέτεινεν, ἥπλωσε μέγαν, and for the end of it, of *Ss. App.* 665 κάλλος ... ξένον – in general, it can be said that ξένον meaning 'wonderful', especially at verse end, is typical of Konstantinos. I add that ὠραίσιμα (v. 2), which also occurs in the verses edited by Karpozelos, 16–17, decidedly *sapit Constantinum Rhodium*.

<sup>62</sup> πρὸς printed by Legrand is simply a typographical error.

<sup>63</sup> For instance, it seems to me that L 54.24–25 ὁμοῦ μὲν ἐπλήρωσεν ἡδονῆς ξένης / ὁμοῦ δὲ λαμπρότης ἐμπέπληκέ με recalls Konst. Rhod. *Ss. App.* 905–906 ὅλην ἀπεπλήρωσε τῆς πονηρίας, / ὅλην κατεσκεύασε: note the presence of πληρῶ / συμπληρῶ, the anaphora (with a similar sound) and the sequence of B7 (the presence of ξένος, 'extraordinary' at v. 24 (see above) should also be noticed): a clue that Konstantinos of Rhodes was in his mind!

<sup>64</sup> Σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου / λειμῶνος, ὃ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω. Mauropous substituted στέφανον with στέφος (and accordingly changed the pronoun), in order to avoid a bisyllabic eighth element.

<sup>65</sup> V. 3: ἀλλότρινον πρόσφθεγμα, σοὶ μάλα πρέπον.



added to Pisides' work by a later compiler: Gonnelli already pointed this out in his *apparatus fontium*<sup>66</sup> – he also mentioned Mauropous' verses.

It is indeed possible that Mauropous had in mind *also* pseudo-Pisides, because, as later on his own verses, he metaphorically turned Hippolytus' στέφανος into the dedication of a literary work.<sup>67</sup> But it has gone unnoticed that Euripides' passage was also imitated by Konstantinos Rhodios in a crucial passage of his work, the dedication of his poem to Konstantinos VII, Ss. *App.* 12–14:

ὑπουργὸς αὐτόκλητος ἦκω σοι φέρων  
 ῥοδοπλεκῆ στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτων  
 ὄλον πλακέντα μουσικῶν ἐξ ἀνθέων.

I think that we might go so far as to suppose that Mauropous turned his attention to the passage of Euripides on account of its imitation at the beginning of Konstantinos' poem – however, I do not rule out the possibility that he would also have recollected pseudo-Pisides.

I end this part of the article devoted to the stylistic similarities between Konstantinos of Rhodes and Mauropous by briefly discussing some of the ecphrastic poems, which illustrate in succession some scenes of the life, passion and triumph of Christ: his birth, baptism, and so on. The poem of Konstantinos finishes<sup>68</sup> with a description of the mosaics of the church of the Holy Apostles which likewise represented scenes of the life and passion of Christ – they are actually more complete than those described by Mauropous: for instance, the cycle of The Holy Apostles begins with the Annunciation, whereas the pictures of Mauropous begin with the birth of Christ. I am not implying here that he was describing the same work of art celebrated by Konstantinos: it was another, as the title of poem 2 clearly shows: εἰς πίνακας μεγάλους τῶν ἑορτῶν. But there are, in my opinion, such remarkable stylistic<sup>69</sup> resemblances between these verses of the two poets, that I would go so far as to assume that Mauropous drew his inspiration from Konstantinos *especially in this part* of his poetical work. It is obvious that some of the images are just traditional, and suggested by the Gospels; but, on account of the fact that Mauropous elsewhere in his poems closely imitated Konstantinos Rhodios, we are entitled to suppose that he followed his predecessor also in the overall description of the scenes.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Gonnelli reprints this poem at the end of his edition of *Hexaem.*, pp. 242–245; Tartaglia, *Carmi*, p. 425 n. 5 thinks that it is by Pisides himself.

<sup>67</sup> Mauropous' poem is actually the dedication of a speech on the κοίμησις.

<sup>68</sup> As a matter of fact, the poem on The Holy Apostles, as it is transmitted by the manuscripts, is almost certainly incomplete.

<sup>69</sup> And maybe more than just 'stylistic': it should be noticed, for example, that in Mauropous, exactly as in Konstantinos of Rhodes, the scene of the Baptism is immediately followed by that of the Transfiguration of Christ (compare L 3 and 4 with Ss. *App.* 792–803 and 804–828).

<sup>70</sup> See L 3.19–21 φωνή δ' ἐκείθεν πατρικὴ βροντᾶ μέγα, / υἱὸν καλοῦσα Χριστὸν ἡγαπημένον. / καὶ μαρτυρεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα κτλ. and Ss. *App.* 797–799 φωνῆς ἄνωθεν πατρός ἐξιχνουμένης / καὶ

As far as Ioannes Geometres, another very important predecessor, is concerned, there would seem to be no significant stylistic parallels with Maupous: neither in the hexametric/elegiac poems<sup>71</sup> nor in his dodecasyllables (which, because of the metre, would more easily lead to imitation).<sup>72</sup> One of the few similarities: we have already seen that τὸ θαῦμα τῆς γῆς / τῆς γῆς τὸ θαῦμα is a typical phrase of Maupous (see above); as a matter of fact, it also occurs in Geometres *Carm.* 9, 70 (Cramer 278.5 = PG 106, 914) τὸ θαῦμα τῆς γῆς\* – but in this case I believe it is just a fortuitous coincidence.<sup>73</sup>

A difficult question to answer is how the considerable number of parallels between Maupous and contemporary poets should be interpreted. The most important case

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μαρτυρούσης υἰὸν ἡγαπημένον / τὸν Χριστὸν εἶναι κτλ. (unlike his model, Maupous, by using ἐκείθεν, which picks up ἄνω [15] skilfully avoids a proparoxytonon before B5); (very unsure) L 4.8 βλέπει δὲ Μωσῆς τὴν χάριν σὺν Ἡλίου and *Ss. App.* 811 Μωσῆν τὲ τὸν μέγιστον Ἡλίαν θ' ἅμα; L 5.22 ἐξάλλεται γ' οὐκ ὢν νεκρὸς ἐκ τάφου and *Ss. App.* 841 ἐκ τοῦ τάφου πηδῶντα δορκάδος δίκην; L 5.23 καὶ δὴ βαδίζει, κειρίαις ἐσφιγμένους and *Ss. App.* 838–839 ταῖς κειρίαις τὲ τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας / ἐσφιγμένον (both of course had in mind the Gospel: Ev. Joh. 11.44 ἐξηλθεν ὁ τεθνηκώς δεδεμένος τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας κειρίαις). Though spread over many lines, there are, I think, clear resemblances between L 6.15–22 σὺ δ', ὦ ... Σιών ... ἐμπεπλησμένη / ληστών ... οὐς οὐδ' ... οὗτος ἐντρέψει ... δέχου τὸν δεσπότην and *Ss. App.* 857 μὴδ' ἐντραπέισαν (scil. Σιών) τὸν ἑαυτῆς δεσπότην. On the whole, from this comparison the verses of Maupous appear more refined and delicate than those of his model, who did not shrink from mentioning unpleasant details which Maupous, in his corresponding section, regularly omitted (see for example, in the tale of Lazarus, the condition of the corpse in *Ss. App.* 834–837 τὸν Λάζαρον δὲ τετραήμερον πάλιν / τάφῳ κατατεθέντα καὶ σεσηπότα, / μυδῶντα, νεκρὸν ἀάπαν ἡλλιωμένον, / οὐλαῖς τε καὶ σκώλῃσι συμπεφυρμένον, of which verses Maupous imitated only the first two: L 5.11 ἰδοὺ σέσηπε· τὸν τεταρταῖον βλέπεις. Finally, we could point to the frequent presence in these verses of the noun / adjective ζωηφόρος, which occurs in almost every one poem, and always at the verse end (L 5.13, 6.13, 8.7, 9.15), which should be compared with its analogous presence in this part of *Ss. App.* (again at verse end): 833 and 840.

<sup>71</sup> Now to be read, with a very good commentary, in E.M. van Opstall (ed.), *Jean Géomètre, Poèmes en hexamètres et en distiques elegiaques* (Leiden/Boston, 2008).

<sup>72</sup> A vague resemblance can be noticed between the nominal style of some poems by Maupous (especially those devoted to the celebration of the *πίνακες* on the life of Christ, L 2–11) and a poem by Geometres on a representation of the Annunciation (*Carm.* 73, Cramer 299.6–11 = PG 106, 936): see for example L 2. 25–27 ἐπικροτοῦντες ἄγγελοι ταῖς ἐλπίσι· / μήτηρ ἄνδρος· παρθένος βρεφοτρόφος· / μάγων τὰ λαμπρὰ δῶρα· ποιμένων δρόμος κτλ. and Geometr., 1–3 δοκῶ βροτοῦσθαι καὶ πάλιν τὸν Δεσπότην· / χαίρων ὁ πεμφθείς, ἡ Κόρη θαμβουμένη, / ὥστ' τὸ Πνεῦμα, Πατρός ἡ χεὶρ ὑψόθεν κτλ. However, such an asyndetic sequence of images was possibly just a typical feature of ecphrastic poems. The difference between Maupous and Geometres can easily be perceived by comparing the poem edited by the Sakkelions on the church of St George and the delightful celebration of the church of Studios by Geometres (*Carm.* 96 [Cramer 306.9–309.13 = PG 106, 942–944]): there is not a single lexical or thematic coincidence – how different was Maupous' attitude towards the ecphrastic poem of Konstantinos of Rhodes.

<sup>73</sup> L 91.18–19 πρὸς ὕψος ἐκτείνοντο καὶ δοκῇ μέγας / ὥσπερ κολοσσός and Geometres, *Carm.* 10.18 (Cramer 279.5 = PG 106, 915) ὕψος κολοσσός, καὶ τέμνων τὸν ἀέρα are to be considered vague and probably accidental resemblances.

is that of the poems of Psellos, which show some similarities with those of Mauropous, although they are not as numerous as one would have expected, given the great extent of the former's poetical work. It is indeed quite difficult to see whether we should consider them as the outcome of mutual influence, or whether Psellos just picked up some phrases of his old teacher. The most significant instance is L 92. 4 ὁρᾷς ὅσος κύκλωθεν ἡγέρθη κλύδων;, which can be compared with W 17.2 νῦν συμφορᾶς ἄπαυστος ἡγέρθη κλύδων. The following case can be added: L 36. 31 ἡδύς, προσηγής, ἴλεως, πᾶσιν φίλος, and W 19.38 ἡδύς, προσηγής, εὐσταθής, ἡδρασμένος.

An interesting case is L 41. For the sake of clarity, I quote it in its entirety.

Ζωῆς ἀπελθὼν φάσμα καὶ χθὲς ἡμέρα,  
 ψευδεῖς ὄνειροι καὶ πλάνοι, σῶζοισθέ μοι,  
 παῖξαντες ἡμᾶς ἐν σκιαῖς βραχὺν χρόνον,  
 εἴτα προδόντες καὶ λιπόντες ἀθρόον·  
 οὐδὲν γὰρ ἦτε πλὴν ἐνυπνίων χάρις,  
 κλέπτουσα καὶ σφάλλουσα τοὺς πλανωμένους.

The underlined phrases are reminiscent of Eur. *Iph. Taur.* 569, ψευδεῖς ὄνειροι, χαίρετ'· οὐδὲν ἦτ' ἄρα;<sup>74</sup> interestingly, this same classical passage was picked up by W 21.210.

ψευδεῖς ὄνειροι, χαίρετ', οὐδὲν ἦτ' ἄρα.

I think that the different attitude towards the ancient source should be stressed: Mauropous elegantly reworked it, assimilating the Euripidean phrases with his own words; Psellos, on the contrary, limited himself to put it *sic et simpliciter* into his text, without modifying it. In this case we witness, I think, the superior stylistic complexity of Mauropous and the rather careless *facilitas* of Psellos. And we can even go so far as to imagine that Mauropous lectured on that piece of Euripides, and that Psellos was struck by that phrase, which both he and his teacher were to put into their own verses.

There are other, less significant, parallels.<sup>75</sup> However, we should seriously envisage the possibility that these resemblances are just the outcome of a standard poetical language which both Mauropous and Psellos employed, without implying that they influenced each other. Sometimes we get the impression, which is, however, hard to prove, that, whenever Mauropous criticized the poets who write *περισσῶς* (as in the famous L 1.10–15 and *passim*, 92.35 and 46) he *might* have been thinking of Psellos.

<sup>74</sup> This ancient source of the verses escaped de Lagarde.

<sup>75</sup> See L 36.41 τὰ πάντα φροῦδα, πάντα φάσμα φασμάτων, and W 17.224 ἅπαντα φροῦδα τῶν ἐμῶν τρυφημάτων; L 92.100 ἕως ἀποπτᾶν πάντας ἀθρόον φύγοι, and W 17.272 πῶς ἐξαπέπτῃ, πῶς ἀπῆλθεν ἀθρόον, for which we should also quote L 84.9 ἀπῆλθον, ἐξέπτῃσαν ἐν βραχεὶ χρόνῳ (for a later parallel of this phrase, see Manasses, *Hodoep.* 1.50: γοργῶς ἀπέπτῃ καὶ παρήλθεν ὀξέως). Another resemblance is, I think, L 36.3 ἕως ἔτι ζῶν, φῶς ὑπῆρχε τοῦ κόσμου, and W 17.85 ὀφθαλμὸς αὐτῷ, φῶς ὑπῆρχες\* ἡδύον; L 29.22, μουσεῖον αὐτόχρημα, γνῶσιν ἐμπνέον, and W 19.108 Αὐγουστον αὐτόχρημα καὶ στεφίφορον, can be considered a rhythmic similarity.

Anyhow, Mauropous' discretion and moderation<sup>76</sup> contrasts with the prolixity of Psellos' panegyrics (just think of the endless poem written for the death of Skleraina, W 17, and others).

The stylistic resemblances between Mauropous and Christophoros Mitylenaios are more notable. To begin with, L 93.7 *ἄνθρωπος ὦν, ἄνθρωπε, μηδὲν φῆς μέγα* recalls K 119.4, *ἄνθρωπος ὦν ἄνθρωπον αἰδέσθητί με*, and is also reminiscent of Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 2. 1. 11, v. 334, *μηδὲν μέγ' εἴπης, συντόμως, ἄνθρωπος ὦν*.<sup>77</sup>

We have seen that L 81. 1 picks up the beginning of Ecclesiastes (see above); the same biblical passage is imitated by Mitylenaios.<sup>78</sup>

Other parallels are less manifest;<sup>79</sup> some others are purely lexical, viz. the use of rare words: though less striking than the presence of a common phrase, these coincidences are important.<sup>80</sup> To be sure, as in the case of Psellos, they might suggest that these poets influenced each other, or that they just enjoyed a common stylistic atmosphere, that, indeed, of eleventh-century poetry. Some other cases call for a more attentive analysis. For instance, L 54.45, *καὶ πράγμα, θαῦμα, θαῦμα θαυμάτων πέρα*, might be reminiscent of *Ss. App.* 738, *φέρων τὸ θαῦμα θαύματος λόγου πλέον*, or derive from the first verse of the 'canzoniere' of Christophoros, K 1.1: *ὦ θαῦμα, Θωμᾶ, θαύματος παντὸς πέρα*.

It actually seems to me that Christophoros offers a more thorough reworking of the verse (note the alliteration), which might suggest that he took from Mauropous a phrase which the latter created after having been inspired by his *Lieblingsauthor* Konstantinos of Rhodes; we cannot be certain about this.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>76</sup> On Mauropous' characteristic μετριότης, see Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 62–63.

<sup>77</sup> Leon Choer. *Chiliost. Theolog.* 430, *ἀνθρωπίνης, ἄνθρωπε, χειρὸς καὶ τέχνης* also probably derives from Greg. Naz. As to the verse of Mauropous, see also the similar allure of Philes, *Carmina*, 59.28 (vol. 1, p. 29): *ὥστε βλέπων, ἄνθρωπε, μηδὲν θαυμάσης*.

<sup>78</sup> K 16.8–9 *ματαιότης τὰ πάντα, Σολομὼν λέγει, / ματαιοτήτων ἄντικρυς ματαιότης*.

<sup>79</sup> Compare L 96.6 *ἐξουσία κρότων γὰρ οὐκ οἶδε[ν] κόρον* with K 105.54 *ἤδη γὰρ οἶδα τῶν ἐπαίων σοι κόρον*.

<sup>80</sup> It is unlikely that in the poem edited by Karpozelos v. 2 οὗς συντέθηκα *στηλιτεύων* τοὺς τρόπους is completely independent from K 136.173 *καὶ τοὺς ἐαυτῶν στηλιτεύοντες βίους*; so *ibid.* v. 58 *ὅς πεζολεκτῶν ἐμφρόνως ἔφη λέγων* should have something to do with K 1.31 *καὶ πεζολεκτῶν\* ὡς ἄπειρος γραμμάτων*. As to v. 19, *οὗς ἡξιώσας χρυσοπάστων ἀμφίων*, see the presence of the compound at K 62.11 *χρυσοπάστου ... πορφύρας*. Karpozelos himself remarked that v. 9 *ἄφωνον ὄντα καὶ τῶν ἰχθύων πλέον* contains a phrase which recalls a few similar passages of Christophoros (Karpozelos, *Συμβολή*, 74) – I remark by the way that the beginning of Christophoros' collection was picked up by Philes, *Carmina* 82.12 (vol. 1, p. 260). From the poems edited by de Lagarde, compare further L 89.11 *ὑπερπερισσέω τε καὶ χαίρω πλέον* and K 128.6 *ὑπερπεριττεύουσιν ἐκ τῶν κλασμάτων*.

<sup>81</sup> In his turn, Konstantinos of Rhodes was possibly influenced by Georg. Pisid. *Epigr.* 33.1, *ὦ θαῦμα, θαῦμα, τῇ σαθρᾷ ξύλου φύσει*.

## Thematic Parallels with Later Poetry

Later Byzantine poetry does not show remarkable stylistic similarities with our poet. I am far from having analysed it thoroughly, but I can at least say that I have not found any significant parallel with Theophylaktos of Ochrid's poems<sup>82</sup> and Konstantinos Manasses' *Hodoeporicon*;<sup>83</sup> just a few with Nikolaos Kallikles;<sup>84</sup> none with other minor texts.<sup>85</sup>

Even fewer parallels with Mauropous' poetry are found in the verse novels of the twelfth century (Niketas Eugenianos, Theodoros Prodromos). On the whole, these poets seem to have chosen to turn their gaze towards the classical authors (or to imitate contemporary poets) rather than draw upon their colleagues of the tenth and eleventh centuries. And the classical sources themselves imitated (or quoted *tout court*) by twelfth-century poets, were also, by then, slightly different. This change of taste can be seen, for instance, in the learned verse novel of Niketas Eugenianos, *Drosilla et Charicles*, which reveals a deep knowledge of the classical epigrams (to an extent which sometimes borders on *cento*), but also of authors hitherto almost unknown (as Musaeus and maybe Nonnus).<sup>86</sup> In short, it seems that previous Byzantine poetry was no longer

<sup>82</sup> Theophylaktos of Ochrid, ed. P. Gautier, *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera* (Thessaloniki, 1980).

<sup>83</sup> One of the most similar passages is the deservedly famous one in which Mauropous recalls the long nights he had spent studying in the house (which he had by then lost): L 47.22–28 ἐν σοὶ πόνους ἤνεγκα μακροὺς καὶ κόπους, / ἐν σοὶ διήξα νύκτας ἀγρύπνους ἔλας, / ... / καὶ προστετηκώς ταῖς γραφαῖς καὶ ταῖς βίβλοις: these beautiful verses can be compared with the analogous portrait which Manasses drew of himself at *Hodoep.* 1.9 νυκτὸς δέ μοι κάμνοντι καὶ πονομένῳ and 2.93–94 ὦ νυκτῶν δρόμοι, / ἅς ἀνάλωσα ταῖς βίβλοις ἐντυγχάνων: this, however, just testifies the presence of a similar *mood* and the utilization of a similar *image*, and does not imply that Manasses had in his memory the verses of Mauropous – it is indeed the typical portrait of a *poeta doctus*, which Byzantine men of letters liked to attribute to themselves. L 89.32, ὡς ἄνθεσιν μέλισσαν ἐν βίβλοις στρέφων, and *Hodoep.* 1.7–8, καὶ δὴ βιβλίων χάριτας εὐρὴν ἀφθόνους / τοὺς τῶν μελισσῶν ἀπεμιμούμενη πόνους, is nothing more than a similar image, moreover a very widespread one. *Hodoep.* 1.163, ἔφωσε, κατέπληξε, κατήστραψέ με, rhythmically recalls L 54.20, ἔθελξεν, ἡλλοίωσεν, ἐξέστηγέ με; similar, in the same way, also L 7.10, φροῦδοι μαθηταὶ καὶ πτερωτοὶ δ' οἰκέται, and *Hodoep.* 1.75, φροῦδος στεναγμός, ἀλαλον δὲ τὸ στόμα.

<sup>84</sup> All parallels are collected in the apparatus fontium of the edition by Romano, as for example L 31.14: καινὸν τὸ θαῦμα, and Nic. Call. 30.6: ὦ θαῦμα καινόν! and so on.

<sup>85</sup> For example the verses of Theophylaktos of Bulgaria and those of Basileios Kekaumenos for the death of Anastasios Lizix (both edited by Mercati, see *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1, pp. 321–342 and 348–372).

<sup>86</sup> See the classical sources gathered by A. Giusti in the *apparatus fontium* of the edition Niketas Eugenianos, *De Drosillae et Chariclis amoribus*, ed. F. Conca (Amsterdam, 1990). On the imitation of the ancient epigrams in the verse novel of Niketas, see for instance Herbert Hunger, 'On the Imitation (ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature', *DOP* 23/24 (1969–1970), 17–38. Theodoros Prodromos, *Catomyomachia*, v. 230 ἅπαντα φροῦδα can be compared with L 36.41, τὰ πάντα φροῦδα\*, but it certainly derives from tragedy, see Hunger's *apparatus fontium*.

very authoritative, with the obvious exception of Pisides, who counted as a classic. How different had been the attitude of Mauropous towards, say, Konstantinos of Rhodes.

Before turning our attention to some thematic resemblances between Mauropous and Mouzalon, it is necessary to spend a few words on Philes. I must confess that I have analysed this prolific author only superficially: it is possible, however, to draw a (very provisional) conclusion. The style of Philes looks so idiomatic (and altogether homogeneous) that it becomes very difficult to ascertain his sources, especially the Byzantine ones. That he knew Mauropous' work is, however, at least plausible, though it cannot be proven with certainty.

Indeed, there are a few stylistic similarities. Verses 10–11 of the poem published by the Sakkelions

δν (scil. δόμον) ἐκ πόθου ζέοντος ἡνθρακωμένον  
καὶ πίστεως ἄνωθεν ἀρραγεστάτης

can be compared with Philes, *Carmina* 68.7–8 (vol. 1, p. 243):

οὐκοῦν δέχου, πάναγνε, τὸν θεῖον δόμον,  
δν ἐκ πόθου ζέοντος ὠργάνωσά<sup>87</sup> σοι.

One poem by Mauropous (L 2.1) begins in a lively fashion with these words: τί τοῦτο; φῶς ἦστραψεν ὡς ἐξ αἰθέρος. Philes too seems to appreciate this kind of *incipit* – in one case, *Carm.* 60.1 (vol. 2, p. 118), it closely recalls Mauropous: τί τοῦτο; χειμῶν, ἀλλὰ φῶς ἐδαλψέ με; see further 50.1 (vol. 1, p. 24): τί τοῦτο; φησὶ τῷ διδασκάλῳ Τίτος; 102.1 (vol. 1, p. 45): τί τοῦτο; βαβαί, ζῶσι μικροῦ καὶ λίθοι; 115.1 (vol. 1, p. 53): τί τοῦτο; Μωσῆ ῥάβδος ἰσχύει τόσον.

*Carm.* 31.30–31 (vol. 2, p. 74),

ἡδύς, προσηγής, εὐστεφής αὐτοκράτωρ,  
χρηστός, γαληνός, εὐμενής ὑπὲρ φύσιν,

obviously recalls L 36.30–31,

πρᾶος, γαληνός, ἐγκρατής, σώφρων πλέον,  
ἡδύς, προσηγής, ἱεως, πᾶσιν φίλος,

but similar phrases occur in (at least) another famous Byzantine poet, as we have seen.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> He changed the principal verb replacing ἐγείρω with his *Lieblingswort* (ὀργανώω).

<sup>88</sup> Moreover, Philes seems to imitate here Georg. Pisid. *Alyp.* 111, πρᾶος, προσηγής, εὐλαβής, παθοκράτωρ, / ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι κυρίως αὐτοκράτωρ.



A few more similarities are less certain;<sup>89</sup> and others are still less significant, and possibly fortuitous.<sup>90</sup>

Let us go back to the Comnenian age. During the reign of Alexios Komnenos, Bishop Mouzalon wrote a relatively long poem in order to justify his renunciation of the see of Cyprus.<sup>91</sup> The crooked style of this notable piece of poetry shows no substantial parallels with that of Mauropous;<sup>92</sup> there are, however, a few thematic likenesses with the subjects of the longest poems of Mauropous' collection. Let us briefly examine them.

I already mentioned L 93, a 'palinodic' poem, where Mauropous declares that a mighty δυνάστης (53) has energetically put him into the world, while the poet was willing to withdraw from it: Mauropous alluded to his appointment as a metropolitan, which he vainly tried to refuse, as repeatedly said in L 91 and 92, the other two poems from the group of the 'bishopric poems'.<sup>93</sup>

L 91 is a lively dialogue between the poet and an interlocutor who raises objections to the statements of the poet who, at the end of the poem, strongly reaffirms his position against the lure of a successful career. L 92 begins in a mimetic way: its core is the praise of λογισμός as the only instrument by which the poet might rescue himself from the dangers of the world, especially the temptation of holding important offices.<sup>94</sup> L 93 is perhaps the most interesting of the three: it mainly consists of a very long sentence: at the beginning, Mauropous tells the reader, he would have thought that he would escape the troubles of the world – but a mighty hand put him into 'the middle'; the poem then reveals that he is talking about the emperor.<sup>95</sup> I reproduce the whole main passage, because its style is remarkable:

<sup>89</sup> Philes, *Carmina* 43.7 (vol. 1, p. 216) and 95.122 (vol. 1, p. 275): ἤρθη κλύδων (verse end) might echo either Mauropous or Psellos.

<sup>90</sup> So I think of L 9.10, ἡ χεὶρ ... παρειμένα τρέμει (see above) and 79.1 (*Cod. Esc.* I 35 M.) τὰς χεῖρας ... παρειμένας; as to L 27.1, πλεκτὸν ... στέφος (see above), see 64.3 (*Cod. Esc.* I 31 M.) τὸ πλακὲν ... στέφος, 129.4 (*Cod. Flor.* I 319 M.), φρίζον θεωρῶν τούσδε τοὺς ὑπερμάχους recalls L 4.1, φρίζον, θεατά, τὴν ὀρωμένην θέαν, but probably derives from Pisides, see above.

<sup>91</sup> Sophia Doanidou, "Η παραίτησις Νικολάου τοῦ Μουζάλωνος ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Κύπρου. Ἀνέκδοτον ἀπολογητικὸν ποίημα", *Ελληνικά*, 7 (1934): pp. 109–150.

<sup>92</sup> L 92.38 τὸ ζωτικὸν μοι πνεῦμα συνθάλω μόλις, and Mouzalon 739, τοῦ ζωτικοῦ γὰρ πνεύματος συσπωμένου, just proves that both poets were aware of the Galenic (and, generally, Byzantine) medical terminology.

<sup>93</sup> Poems 89–93 form a single unity according to Karpozelos, *Συμβολή*, p. 98; Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', p. 381 chooses to distinguish between 89–91 and the epigrams dealing with the bishopric, 92–93.

<sup>94</sup> On 92 see especially Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', p. 379. This (relatively) long, skilfully built poem begins with the image of the poet sailing between the (bishop's) βαθμοὶ and ὁρόνοι, which is reminiscent of Scylla and Charybdis and, from 31 on, it develops a coherent imagery which is clearly taken from medical language — see above; it also alludes to marasmuses (52 ξηρὸς γὰρ εἰμι τῇ πυρώσει τοῦ πάθους; at 62ff. the image of the θρυαλλίς probably derives from Gal. *De differentiis febrium* 1. 10, a much read treatise).

<sup>95</sup> See Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', pp. 380–381.

τοιοῦτον ἢ βλάπτουσα τὸν νοῦν κουφότης  
 20 πείθει νομίζειν ὡς ἑαυτοῦ τις κράτει,  
 καὶ τὸν βίον τίθησιν ὡς αὐτῷ φίλον,  
 τὸν πάντα δὲ στρέφοντα πανσόφοις λόγοις  
 καὶ πάντας εὐθύνοντα πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον  
 οὐκ ἔννοεῖν δίδωσιν ὡς οὐ φευκτέος,  
 25 ἕως λαθῶν τις ἐμπέσσοι καὶ νοῦν λάβοι,  
 ὃς κάμει πάντα τὸν πρὸ τοῦ γλυκὺν βίον  
 ἀπραγμόνως ζήσαντα καὶ γαληνίως,  
 πάλαι τε «χαίρειν» πᾶσι τοῖσδ' εἰρηκότα –  
 βαθμοῖς, προπομπαῖς, ἀξιώμασι, θρόνοις,  
 30 αὐτῇ κακῶν ζᾶλη τε καὶ τρικυμία,  
 ὧν ἐμπέπλησται πᾶσα δόξα τοῦ βίου –,  
 ἤδη τε νικᾶν εἰς τέλος πεπεισμένον  
 (ὡς ἂν τις ἔνθεν οἷς προγέγραπται τότε,  
 35 μᾶλλον δ' ἐκείθεν οἷς προπέπρακται μάθοι),  
 καὶ δὴ πρὸς ὕψος χειρας ἐξαίροντά με,  
 καὶ δὴ κροτοῦντα σύμβολον νίκης μέγα  
 φθάσας κραταιᾷ χειρὶ νῦν συλλαμβάνει,  
 καὶ τὴν ἄκαμπτον καρδίαν κάμψας βία,  
 ἄγει φέρει τε, καὶ τίθησιν εἰς μέσον  
 40 τὸν ἐκφυγεῖν δόξαντα πᾶν ἤδη μέσον.  
 τῶν πρὶν δ' ἐκείνων ἀστάτων ἐνυπνίων  
 καὶ τῶν λογισμῶν οἷς ἑμαυτὸν ἐκράτουν,  
 κατεσκέδασται σύγχυσίς τις καὶ ζόφος,  
 οὕτω θεοῦ σφήλαντος αὐτοὺς ἀθρόον,  
 οὕτω θεοῦ φύραντος ἀρρήτῳ τρόπῳ  
 45 καὶ πάντα συγχέαντος, ὡς ἀγνωσίᾳ  
 σέβοιμεν αὐτόν, ὡς τις εἶπε τῶν πάλαι –  
 ἀλλότριος μὲν, πλὴν καλῶς δοκῶν φάναι.  
 τοῦ θαύματος γὰρ ἔνθεν αὐτῷ τὸ πλεόν,  
 ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου τῶν ἀδῆλων κριμάτων,  
 50 ὧν οἶδεν οὐδεὶς τοὺς ἀπορρήτους λόγους,  
 οἷς εἶξα κάγῳ. καὶ τί γὰρ παθεῖν ἔδει,  
 εἰς τὸν δυνάστην ἐμπεσόντα τὸν μέγαν;

*Note:* 26 cf. 48. 5 γλυκεῖαν ... βίαν 27 cf. Eur. fr. 193. 2 Kannicht ζῆν ἡδέως ἀπράγμονα  
 36 κρατοῦντα dub. Kazhdan 37 κραταιᾷ χειρὶ tragicum (Eur. HF 964, and so on) et  
 praesertim sacrum (LXX) 38 cf. Pind. Isthm. 3/4. 71b ψυχὰν δ' ἄκαμπτος 45–47 Eur.  
 Hec. 958–960 φύρουσι δ' αὐτὰ θεοὶ πάλιν τε καὶ πρόσω / ταραγμὸν ἐντιθέντες, ὡς ἀγνωσίᾳ  
 / σέβωμεν αὐτούς.



This long piece gives a clear idea of a most emphatic style which Mauropous liked to employ, characterized by long sentences, brimming with parenthetic clauses.<sup>96</sup> The key word of the passage is τὸ μέσον: far from recalling the famous metaphor of a life free from troubles, as in classic literature, the ‘middle’ is here a sheer synonym for troubles. It implicitly appears shortly before at verses 15–18, where the poet compares himself to a pilot who steers his course in the open sea:

καὶ τὴν παρούσαν εὖ καθεστῶσαν βλέπων,  
τὴν αὔριον μάταιος οὐκ ἐπεσκόπει,  
μέσῃν τε τὴν θάλασσαν εἰσέτι πλέων,  
ὥς ἐντὸς ὁρμῶν ἐθρασύνετο φθάσας.

Μέσος in lines 39–40 hints generically at the ‘world’ and perhaps specifically at the secular clergy as opposed to the monks. Now this negative meaning also occurs in other eleventh-century poems, such as those of Mouzalon and Nikolaos of Kerkyra;<sup>97</sup> see Mouzalon 13, οὐ γάρ τι χρηστὸν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν πραγμάτων, and Nikolaos of Kerkyra, 65–66:

θάπτον διδαχθῆς ἐν μέσῳ πονηρίαν  
ἢ περ διδάξεις ἀρετὴν τοὺς ἐν μέσῳ.

To explain these likenesses we surely do not need to assume that Mouzalon and Nikolaos imitated Mauropous – if anything, it was Nikolaos who inspired Mouzalon. These parallels with our poet seem to testify that anxiety about an Emperor’s appointment far from the βασιλὶς τῶν πόλεων implied a more or less identical literary pattern: emotions took a standard form, which required complaints about the forced involvement with the μέσον, and the avowed desire of taking refuge in a μονή. It can be exemplified by a lapidary verse of Nikolaos, 242:

Ἐκεῖνό φημι, φευκτέον μοι τοῦ μέσου.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>96</sup> In 45–47 the poet embellishes his verses with a quotation from Euripides (see apparatus) which de Lagarde could not identify (‘quis ille?’): Euripides is called ἀλλότριος, ‘pagan’, like Plato and Plutarch in the most famous poem of Mauropous (L 43).

<sup>97</sup> Nikolaos Kerkyraios, ed. S. Lambros, *Κερκυραϊκὰ Ἀνέκδοτα* (Athens, 1882), pp. 30–41. It is also a sort of key word at L 91. 27: ἀλλὰ κροτοῦσι πᾶς ὄχλος τοὺς ἐν μέσῳ.

<sup>98</sup> I wish to thank Enrico Magnelli and Maria Rees for kindly reading this paper before publication. Camillo Neri inspected for me Reitzenstein’s edition of Mauropous’ etymological poem.

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## Chapter 11

# The *Dioptra* of Philippos Monotropos: Didactic Verses or Poetry?

Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb

The *Dioptra*, a work of about 7,000 verses, was written in 1095 by the monk Philippos, in modern literature known as ‘Monotropos’.<sup>1</sup> It is structured in five books: the *Klauthmoi*, a poem of contrition addressed to the Soul, which is placed either as the first or the fifth book of the *Dioptra*, and four books in the form of a dialogue between Soul (*Psyche*) and Body (*Sarx*), who are personified as mistress and maid respectively. In the dialogue part of the text the Soul asks her maid questions concerning various theological and philosophical problems. The subjects discussed cover a variety of aspects of Byzantine moral theology and anthropology. They range from a request for moral instruction (‘What can I do to achieve salvation?’) to inquiries on God and human nature, whose practical relevance is only indirect (‘Why is the voice different from human to human?’ or ‘Why did God create all angels at once, whereas he still keeps creating humans?’).

The two parts of the *Dioptra*, the *Klauthmoi* and the dialogue, belong to two different genres – it has been claimed that they were published separately and were

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<sup>1</sup> The only edition of the whole text of the *Dioptra* was published by Spyridon Lavriotes, *Ἡ Διόπτρα* (Athens, 1920). This edition is based on one manuscript (*Athous Lavra* Ω 17), which preserves a ‘normalized’ form of the text. A critical edition of the *Klauthmoi* based on Paris manuscripts was made by Emmanuel Auvray, *Les Pleurs de Philippe, poème en vers politiques de Philippe le Solitaire* (Paris, 1875). A critical edition of the whole text of the *Dioptra* is being prepared in the framework of the project ‘Die Dioptra des Philippos Monotropos’, which is funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF, Einzelprojekte Nr. P18245; project leaders: Prof. Dr Wolfram Hörandner, Prof. Dr Heinz Miklas). For further bibliography see Lars Hoffmann, ‘Wie sieht wohl die Hölle aus? Bemerkungen zum Charakter byzantinischer Dialog- und Zitationstechnik am Beispiel der Dioptra des Philippos Monotropos’, in Wolfram Hörandner, Johannes Koder and Maria A. Stassinopoulou (eds), *Wiener Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik. Beiträge zum Symposium ‘Vierzig Jahre Institut für Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik der Universität Wien im Gedenken an Herbert Hunger’ (Wien, 4–7 Dezember 2002)* (Vienna, 2004), pp. 203–219; Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb, ‘Die Dioptra des Philippos Monotropos und ihr Kontext. Ein Beitrag zur Rezeptionsgeschichte’, *Byz.* 77 (2007): pp. 9–31; Eirini Afentoulidou-Leitgeb, ‘Die Prosopopoiia in der Dioptra: Didaktisches Mittel oder literarische Charaktere?’, in *Junge Römer – Neue Griechen. Eine byzantinische Melange aus Wien. W. Hörandner, J. Koder, O. Kresten und W. Seibt als Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag* (Vienna, 2008), pp. 7–13.

put together only by later scribes, an assumption that I consider wrong.<sup>2</sup> The modern reception of the two parts of the *Dioptra* is accordingly different: a poem of contrition addressed to one's own soul, like the *Klauthmoi*, is considered inherently lyrical.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the literary character of the dialogue part has been largely ignored. In this paper I will concentrate on the four books of dialogue. First I will discuss some aspects of the didactic character of the dialogue and then I will analyse some of the techniques employed by the author, which made the *Dioptra* more than just lessons in verses.

## Didactic Features

The didactic character of the *Dioptra* is demonstrated in its dialogue form. *Dialogue* was common in *didactic literature* (*Erota-pokriseis*), but also in school practice.<sup>4</sup> The question evokes the curiosity of the readers, which is then satisfied. The structure of *Erota-pokriseis* helps the author to organize the material in relatively short coherent treatises.

The exposition of the subjects in the *Dioptra* is neat and methodical and does not require a high level of education. The author provides plenty of examples to make his argument clear; in many cases he names his sources.<sup>5</sup> In some cases, when there is no unequivocal answer, Philippos exposes various theories: that is the case for example in the question of the exact time of the Second Coming of Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Besides the spiritual edification, which remains the main concern in the *Dioptra*, there are certain elements that are reminiscent of school curricula and suggest that Philippos was at some time of his life involved in teaching. One of those elements is his keen interest in arithmetic and chronology. For example, describing the war between the tribe of Benjamin and the rest of Israel, he gives the number of the victims in the following *riddle*:

<sup>2</sup> Auvray, *Les Pleurs*, pp. 13–14; Venance Grumel, 'Remarques sur la *Dioptra* de Philippe le Solitaire', *BZ*, 44 (1951): pp. 198–211. My arguments against Auvray's and Grumel's theory are explained in the introduction to the forthcoming edition of the *Dioptra*.

<sup>3</sup> Grumel, 'Remarques', pp. 201–202; F. Batjuskov, 'Skazaniya o sporē duši s telom v srednevekovoj literaturē', *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosvēšeniya*, otd. II 271 (September 1890), 158–204; 272 (November 1890), 105–134; 273 (February 1891), 326–342; 274 (March 1891), 147–179; 274 (April 1891), 324–351; 275 (June 1891), 418–442; 276 (July 1891), 57–95; 276 (August 1891), 394–433, here 273 (February 1891), 339–341; Auvray, *Les Pleurs*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> See Robert H. Robins, *The Byzantine Grammarians. Their Place in History* (Berlin/New York, 1993), pp. 125–148; also Michael Kyriakis, 'Student Life in Eleventh Century Constantinople', *Byzantina*, 7 (1975): pp. 375–388.

<sup>5</sup> For example Book 2, vv. 42–45: Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν οὐκ ἔγωγε, Βασίλειος δ' ὁ μέγας / ἀναφανδὸν καὶ παραινέει καὶ διδάσκει τοῖς πᾶσι, / ἄλλὰ καὶ Ἀμφιλόχιος, πρέεδρος Ἰκονίου, / καὶ Ἰωάννης ὁ χρυσοῦς τὴν γλῶτταν τὲ καὶ στόμα; Book 4, v. 147: Φησὶν οὖν Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης, etcetera.

<sup>6</sup> Book 4, vv. 713–767.

ὁμοῦ δὲ πᾶς ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν σφαγέντων τὰ τότε  
 ὑπῆρχον, ὦ κυρία μου, χιλιάδες αἱ πᾶσαι  
 τριπλῇ πεντάς, ἐπέραστε, καὶ δις τοσαῦται πάλιν,  
 πρὸς τούτοις αὖθις ἕτεραι τετράκις τὸ πεντάκις,  
 τῶν ἑνδεκα σαράκοντα καὶ τριάκοντα ἄνδρες.<sup>7</sup>

Another example is the famous chronology of the *Dioptra* which is calculated in various ways: according to the years from Christ's birth, from his Resurrection and from the Creation of the world, as well as the year of the *indictio*, the lunar circle and the solar circle:

ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἄχρι δὴ καὶ τῆς δεῦρο  
 πεπλήρωνται τὰ χίλια, πρὸς δὲ καὶ ἑκατὸν τε  
 καὶ τρία ἐπὶ τούτοις γε ἕως καὶ τοῦ νῦν ἔτους,  
 ἂν δ' ἀριθμῇς ἐκ τῆς ταφῆς τῆς τούτου καὶ τοῦ πάθους,  
 πεφύκασι τὰ χίλια καὶ ἐβδομήκοντά γε.  
 Καὶ πρόσχες μοι τὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ σύνες, ἅπερ λέγω·  
 ἐξ ὅτου τοίνυν κατ' ἀρχὰς Φαέθων ὥπται πόλῳ,  
 εἰσὶ τὰ ἔτη ἅπαντα ψηφίζόμενα οὕτως·  
 πεντάκις χίλια, πρὸς δὲ καὶ πεντακόσιά γε,  
 ἃ μέντοι καὶ παρώχηκεν ἄχρι Χριστοῦ, κυρίου,  
 καὶ οὕτως ἐπεδήμησε σαρκωθεὶς ἐκ Παρθένου·  
 εἶθ' οὕτως ἤδη πεντακῶς καὶ ἑξακῶς<sup>8</sup> παρήλθεν  
 ἰδοὺ καὶ τρία ἕτερα, ἰνδικτιῶν δὲ τρίτη,  
 κύκλος σελήνης δέκατος, ἡλίου εἰκάς τρίτη.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Book 2, vv. 1143–1147: 'The entire number of those who were then killed was, milady, three times five thousands, my dear, plus twice that many plus four times five (thousands), from the eleven (tribes) forty (thousands) and thirty men'. (All translations in this contribution are mine.) In the previous verses Philippos, following the Septuagint (Judg 19–20), gives the number of the victims in each day of the war separately; the sum is 65,130: 25,100 from Benjamin and 40,030 from the rest of Israel – which means that the number 65,000, which Philippos gives in vv. 1145–1146 is rounded.

<sup>8</sup> This very rare form of cardinal numbers was used only for metrical reasons: L.G. Westerink (ed.), *Michael Psellus. Poemata* (Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1992), poem 55 (pseudo-Psellos), vv. 128, 134 (ἐννακός) and 138 (πεντακός); *Anthologiae Graecae Appendix*, (ed.) E. Cougny (Paris, 1890), t. VIII (*Problemata, Aenigmata*) poem 67, p. 575 (τριακῶς).

<sup>9</sup> Book 4, vv. 750–763: 'For, lo, from Christ to the present, a thousand years are completed, plus a hundred, plus three, until the current year; if you count from his entombment and passion, it is a thousand and seventy. And pay attention to the number and understand what I am saying; well, since Phaethon appeared in the sky at the beginning, the years all together are counted in this way: five thousand, plus five hundred, which passed until Christ, our Lord, and thus he came and dwelled (on earth), incarnated of the Virgin; after that, five hundred plus six hundred passed already, and three more; the third *indictio*, the tenth circle of the moon, the twenty third of the sun'. This is the text of the Y-redaction. According to this dating, the *Dioptra* was composed

Occasionally Philippos gives lexicographical or etymological information. In relating the Old Testament story of the battle at Besor (1 Kgs 30) and how David shared the spoils among the soldiers, he makes an excursus to explain the difference between the terms *λάφυρα* and *σκύλα* in a way which is reminiscent of *epimerismoι*:<sup>10</sup>

ἐπίσης οὖν ἐμοίραζε λάφυρά τε καὶ σκύλα·  
σκύλα γὰρ λέγονται, ψυχή, τὰ λαμβανόμενά γε  
ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν πολέμοις μὲν ἀνηρημένων πάντα,  
λάφυρα δὲ κικλήσκουσιν αὖθις τὰ ἀπὸ ζώντων.<sup>11</sup>

In another passage the Soul urges her mistress to show repentance at least in this advanced age, for the young do not know the time of their death, whereas the elderly know that it is near; that can be deduced also from *etymology*: ‘old age’ (γῆρας) derives from ‘to love the earth, that is, the grave’ (ἐρᾶν γαίης).<sup>12</sup>

The didactic aspects of the *Dioptra* are underlined by a number of short texts of mnemotechnic character that were annexed to the *Dioptra* from the very beginning:

Ἐκ τῆς ἀλόγου φύσεως ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἔστι  
ἡ ὀρεξις καὶ ἡ ὀρμή, θυμός, ἐπιθυμία·  
τὰ δ’ ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ σώματι ἡνωμένα πως ὄντα,  
ἄψυχα δέ γε, τὰ ὅστ’ αἰ καὶ πιμελὴ καὶ τρίχες  
νεῦρα καὶ χόνδροι, ὄνυχες, ταῦτα τὰ ἕξ καὶ μόνα.<sup>13</sup>

in 1095 (on 12 May, according to the book epigram that accompanies the *Dioptra*). In the manuscripts of the X-redaction every number is corrected, so that the year of composition is now 1097. The X-redaction has three more verses: ὁμοῦ τὰ ἔτη γίνονται ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ τοῦ πάθους / χίλια ἑβδομήκοντα καὶ δύο δὲ πρὸς τούτοις, / τοῦ ἄνακτος ἑκατάδεκα Ἀλεξίου ἀρτίως. See the insightful comments on the various chronological systems Philippos uses in Grumel, ‘Remarques’; however, Grumel did not recognize the connection between the ‘discrepancy’ in the dating (1095 vs 1097) and the stemmatically attested two families (redactions) of the *Dioptra*.

<sup>10</sup> On *epimerismoι*, the didactic method that consisted of giving lexicographical, grammatical, etymological, metrical or factual information by analysing a text word by word, see Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (2 vols, Munich, 1978), vol. 2, pp. 22–29; see also Robins, *Byzantine Grammarians*, pp. 125–148; ‘Epimerismi’ in: *Der neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike* (Stuttgart/Weimar, 1997), vol. 3, pp. 1145–1146; Aphrodite Borovilou-Genakou, ‘Baroccianus gr. 50: Ἐπιμερισμοὶ κατὰ στοιχεῖον γραφικά. Terminus ante quem pour le lexique de Théodose le Grammairien (IXe s.)’, *Byz*, 72 (2002): pp. 250–269.

<sup>11</sup> Book 2, vv. 591–594: ‘So he was sharing the spoils (*λάφυρα καὶ σκύλα*) equally; for *λάφυρα* are called, my soul, all the things taken from those who are killed in the wars, whereas *σκύλα* are called the things (taken) from the living’.

<sup>12</sup> Book 2, v. 1183: τὸ μέντοι γῆρας εἶρηται παρὰ τὸ ἐρᾶν γαίης. Cf. *Etymologicum Magnum*, (ed.) Thomas Gaisford (Oxford, 1848, repr. Amsterdam, 1962), p. 226.26ff: Γέρων ( ... ) Ἡ παρὰ τὸ τῆς γῆς ἐρᾶν, πλησίον ὄντας θανάτου καὶ τάφου δεομένους.

<sup>13</sup> ‘From the irrational nature, the man has / the appetency, the impulse, the temper, the desire; / the things that are somehow united with the body, / but are inanimate, are the bones, the

## Literary Character

The subjects discussed in the *Dioptra* and their comprehensible exposition only partially explain the immense popularity of the text. Previous scholars have already pointed to its unpretentious language and style. Grumel spoke of its 'sincérité humaine et chrétienne, langage simple et coulant',<sup>14</sup> Beck of the 'Wärme ihrer Empfindungen und der Aufrichtigkeit ihres Tones'.<sup>15</sup>

However, besides the simplicity there are elements in the *Dioptra* that are not devoid of sophistication. These are, for example, the various figures of speech, at a small scale, and, at a large scale, compositional techniques such as the personification and the embedded narrations. In the remaining part of the paper I will discuss the latter, personification and narrations.

### Personification

As mentioned before, four books of the *Dioptra* are conceived as a dialogue between Soul (*Psyche*) and Body (*Sarx*), which are personified as mistress and maid. The two persons of the dialogue are not mere symbolic figures: the author creates literary characters with human attributes; their relationship creates a dynamic that goes beyond the theological question of the relationship between body and soul.<sup>16</sup>

The author attributes *emotions* to the two female characters. They experience joy, anger, fear. For example, Psyche admits that the prospect of the Antichrist frightens her – a feeling, which many Byzantine readers would identify with: ἡ προσδοκία τούτου γὰρ φοβεῖ με καὶ ταράττει.

As humans, the two women can be forgetful. At the beginning of the third book, the mistress poses a question, but then the discussion is diverted to other issues. In the middle of the book, Psyche remarks: 'But you did not answer my original question'. Sarx answers: 'What did you ask? I have forgotten'.

At the end of Book 3 Sarx finishes her discourse with the following words:

ἐμὲ δὲ πάρες, κέκμηκα, ἴν' ὅπως ἀναψύξω,  
καὶ δόξαν ἀναπέμψοιμι Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ μου.<sup>17</sup>

Sarx thus emerges as a person with physical as well as spiritual needs (rest and prayer) and with a life outside the text of the dialogue.

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fat, the hairs, / the nerves, the cartilages, the nails, just these six'. The text is still unedited. It will be included in our new edition of the *Dioptra* as Annex f.

<sup>14</sup> Grumel, 'Remarques', p. 198.

<sup>15</sup> Hans-Georg Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Munich, 1977), p. 642.

<sup>16</sup> See Afentoulidou-Leitgeb, 'Prosopopoiia'.

<sup>17</sup> Book 3, vv. 1556–1557: 'Now leave me, I am tired, so that I get some rest / and give glory to my Lord, my God'.

The two persons act in an elementary time frame. At the beginning of the third book Psyche refers to the previous book, which is placed in the previous day:

Ἴδου καὶ ἄλλο ζήτημα, ἰδοὺ ἑτέρα πεῦσις,  
ἐξ ὧν ἡρώτησά σε χθές ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ λόγῳ.<sup>18</sup>

If we combine this with the already mentioned statement at the end of the same book that Sarx is going to rest, we could assume that the dialogue in each book lasts one day.

The relationship between the two persons takes place on two levels. On the symbolic level, on the one hand, it is the relationship between body and soul; on the level of personification, on the other hand, it is the relationship between the two persons, the mistress/pupil and the maid/teacher, which reflects social structures.

The author is conscious of the existence of these two levels; he sometimes switches playfully from one level to another. That is the case at the beginning of the third book. Soul asks for the reasons why she, the elevated and immaterial, is unified with the low, material Body. The latter answers with a touch of irony:

Πολλὰ ὑψώθης, ὦ ψυχή, πολλὰ ἐφυσιώθης,  
ὥς νοερὰ καὶ αὔλος καὶ ὥς πανυπερτάτη,  
ἀσώματος καὶ λογικῆ καὶ ἀθάνατος ὅλη,  
ὥς οὔσα ἐκ τοῦ ἄνωθεν ἐπουρανίου κόσμου·  
ὁ κόσμος οὗτος οὐκ ἐστὶν ἅπας ἄξιός γάρ σου.  
Ἐγὼ τυγχάνω δυσγενῆς, ἐγὼ χυδαία δούλη,  
ἐκ τοῦδε κόσμου τοῦ τρεπτοῦ, τοῦ φθαρτοῦ καὶ ματαίου.  
Ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων τῶν αὐτοῦ στοιχείων ὅλη πέλω  
καὶ μιὰρὰ καὶ βδελυκτὴ καὶ ῥυπαρά, ὥς λέγεις.  
Καὶ λέγε τὰ δοκοῦντα σοι, κυρία γάρ μου πέλεις,  
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦν ψέγεις ὥς κακὴν ἐμέ, ἦν ἀτιμάζεις  
εἰ με οὐκ ἔχεις, δέσποινα, οὐκ εἰ ἄξια φόλην!<sup>19</sup>

The answer of the maid combines the two levels: Sarx as symbol of the Body is inferior because she is material. Moreover, she, as a person, is socially inferior to her mistress, since she is of low birth (δυσγενῆς), ordinary (χυδαία), a servant (δούλη).

<sup>18</sup> Book 3, vv. 1–2: 'Here is another issue, here is another question, from what I asked you *yesterday* in the second Book (λόγος).'

<sup>19</sup> Book 3, vv. 90–101: 'You are very exalted, Psyche, you are very puffed up, / as intellectual and immaterial and supreme, / totally incorporeal and rational and immortal, / as being from the high heavenly world; / for the whole present world is not worth you; / I am of low birth, I am an ordinary servant / from this changeable, corruptible and vain world; / I am made from its four elements, / I am abominable, repulsive, filthy, as you say./ And keep saying what you think, for you are my mistress; / but, if you had not me, whom you accuse as bad, whom you insult, / milady, you wouldn't be worth a penny!'



Then the mistress demands an explanation for the provocative final sentence. The maid gives an answer that brings the discussion again to the level of symbolism: 'Without me, you would be worthless, because you, the Soul, act through me, the Body'. Then again, the mistress' outrageous reaction is situated at the level of personification:

Καὶ τέως ὅλως καὶ λαλεῖς καὶ τέως ἔχεις στόμα;  
μὴ κόμπαζε, μὴ ἡττηθῆς, ἀθλία, μετ' ὀλίγον.<sup>20</sup>

The maid retorts defiantly and then brings more philosophical-theological arguments, which de-escalate the controversy and bring the text to the level of symbolism:

Δι' ἣν αἰτίαν νὰ σιγῶ, δι' ἣν καὶ ἵνα παύσω;  
εἰ τάχα παρεδόθην σοι ἵνα με ἔχῃς δούλην  
τὴν δὲ αἰτίαν ἀγνοῶ, τὸ πῶς εἰπεῖν οὐκ οἶδα,  
ἀλλ' ὅστις ἐπλασεν ἐμέ, ἐποίησε καὶ σέ γε.<sup>21</sup>

The relationship between the two persons is not only that of mistress and maid, but also that of pupil and teacher. Several dialogues in the *Dioptra* reflect this aspect of their relationship. The teacher (*Sarx*) asks her pupil if she has understood everything so far: *Συνήκας πάντως, δέσποινα, ὃ πρὸ μικροῦ σοὶ εἶπον;*<sup>22</sup> At other instances, she reprimands her, when she asks questions that reveal her ignorance or lack of attention, for example:

Ἀπρόσεκτος κατὰ πολὺν τυγχάνεις, ὦ κυρία,  
καὶ ἀμελής καὶ ῥάθυμος καὶ χαύνη, καθὼς φαίνη.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Characters and Their Author*

The *Dioptra* is a didactic text; the teaching process takes place at two levels: at the level of author and reader, and at the level of the two characters of the dialogue, *Sarx* and *Psyche*. In a way this is the case in all texts belonging to the genre of the *Erotapokriseis*. What distinguishes the *Dioptra* from most *Erotapokriseis* is that in the latter a holy or wise man and his disciple are implied or named, but their person almost disappears, whereas the personifications of the *Dioptra* dialogue are self-sufficient literary characters. The identity of these characters removes the setting of the teaching process even more from the *Erotapokriseis*: it is not a respected, male authority who answers the questions of

<sup>20</sup> Book 3, vv. 117–118: 'And you still talk, and you still have a mouth? / Do not boast, so that you are not defeated in a little while, you miserable!'

<sup>21</sup> Book 3, vv. 119–122: 'Why should I be silent, why should I stop? / It may be that I was given to you as a servant, / for what reason I ignore, I cannot say how, / but, he who created me, created also you.'

<sup>22</sup> Book 3, v. 260: 'Did you understand at all, milady, what I told you a short time ago?'

<sup>23</sup> Book 2, vv. 1539–1540: 'You are very inattentive, milady, / and careless and lazy and sluggish, as it seems.'

his disciples by merit of his virtue and perhaps his intellectual skills; it is a maid who gives her mistress private lessons, her only qualification being her diligent study, as she repeatedly admits. Maybe she is the *alter ego* of Philippos, although she is often treated from a distance and with a kind of irony by her author.

In one case Sarx seems to know more than the author: at the end of the third book she cites two long prose passages on the soul and resurrection. The passages are excerpts from the *Macrinia*, a text written by Gregorios of Nyssa in form of dialogue between himself and his sister Macrina.<sup>24</sup> The marginal notes in most manuscripts give the title of the work, but only few mention Gregorios of Nyssa as the author. However, the verses which introduce the passages reveal Philippos' ignorance at least of the nature of the *Macrinia* (which means that Philippos used a florilegium as his source):

άνηρ σοφός καὶ ἅγιος, εὐγενής τε κατ' ἄμφω,  
ἄλλον τινὰ ὑπέρσοφον τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ σοφίαν  
ἤρετο οὗτος τὸν αὐτόν, περὶ ὧν σὺ ζητοίης.<sup>25</sup>

Psyche asks the name of those wise men; Sarx claims that she knows the answer but she will not give it away, so that her pupil does some research herself:

Τὸ τίνες μὲν οὐ λέγω σοι· ἄλλ' εἰ θέλεις τοῦ γινῶναι,  
καθὼς καγὼ ἐζήτησα ἐπιμελῶς καὶ εὖρον,  
οὕτως οὖν ζήτησον καὐτὴ ἐμπόνως καὶ εὐρήσεις  
καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν καὶ γένος καὶ πατρίδα  
καὶ τῶν ἐξῆς γε τὰ ἐξῆς τὸ οἶα καὶ ὁπόσα·  
οὐ θέλω εἶναι σε νωθρὰν καὶ καταπεπτωκυῖαν,  
ζητητικὴν τε μάλιστα καὶ φιλόπονον μάλλον,  
καὶ ὅταν μέλλης τοῦ μαθεῖν γραφικόν τε καὶ θεῖον,  
ἐρεῦνα οὖν καὶ εὕρισκε τὸ ζητούμενον ἅπαν.<sup>26</sup>

Did Philippos actually know who the author of the *Macrinia* was? Was Sarx's pedagogic method meant to cover the ignorance of her author? I tend to believe that this was the case, and that Philippos playfully used the possibilities offered by the creation of an autonomous literary character.

<sup>24</sup> CPG 3149.

<sup>25</sup> Book 3, vv. 1492–1494: 'A wise and holy man, noble in both aspects, / Asked another man, a very wise one in Christ's wisdom, / About the subjects you inquire about'.

<sup>26</sup> Book 3, vv. 1547–1555: 'I shall not tell you who they are; but if you want to know, / just as I searched diligently and found, / in the same way search yourself painstakingly and you will find / their names and nation and homeland / and so on; / I do not want you to be lazy and slack, / but most inquiring and very industrious, / and whenever you want to learn something scriptural and holy, / inquire and find everything you are looking for'.

### Embedded Narrations

Philippos uses the dialogue between Body and Soul to create characters. On a smaller scale, the short narrations which are embedded time and again in the dialogue give him the opportunity to create situations and characters.

The *Dioptra* is full of metaphors, similes and allusions to biblical events. In eight cases these are extended and elaborated so that they form brief, coherent narratives. From the eight narrations, two are stories from the Old Testament. They are named *ἱστορία* (story, history).<sup>27</sup> The others are fictional. They are called *παράδειγμα* (example) and are in most cases introduced by *ὑπόθου, ὡς ὅταν* or *καθάπερ* ('suppose', 'as if', 'such as').<sup>28</sup> The term *παράδειγμα* is applied both to parables, where the acting persons and the main events – though not every detail – are interpreted symbolically, and to short stories that exemplify a statement.

An example of a narration based on a supposedly historical event is the following: in the second book it is claimed that it is the motivation, not the actual labour, that is rewarded; the argument is supported by the story of King David, who, after the battle at Besor (1 Kgs 30), shared the spoils equally among those who fought and those whose horses were too exhausted to take part in the battle and were therefore appointed to guard the camp. Philippos expands David's words with an interpretation of his act, which culminates in a rude attack against those who would complain about the supposed injustice:

ἀν μὲν οὐκ ἐκαθέζοντο φυλάσσοντες τὰ ροῦχα,  
τὰ πάντα σου νὰ ἐχάωσες, πτωχὸς ἂν κατελείφθης,  
καὶ νῦν ψωμὶν οὐχ εὔρισκες, ὕδωρ οὐδὲ κἂν ὀλως,  
καὶ νὰ ἀπεταντανιάσες, σαλὲ γυμνογυβέρη,  
καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἐνταυθοῖ παρέδωκας βιαίως.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Book 2, vv. 513–615 (1 Kgs 18–22; 30); vv. 970–1157 (Judg 19–20).

<sup>28</sup> Book 2, vv. 629–662 (the two martyrs); Book 3, vv. 574–602 (the ungrateful servant); vv. 1040–1113 (the defeat of the tyrant); Book 4, vv. 107–117 (the murderer at the *furca*, or crime and punishment); vv. 175–238 (the king's son and the humble bride); Book 5, vv. 2040–2054 (the dream of the encounter with a friend).

<sup>29</sup> Book 2, vv. 606–610: 'If they were not left here to guard the garments, / you would have lost everything; you would be left poor, / and you would find no bread by now, nor water, / you would turn your toes up, you stupid naked devil, / and you would surrender your soul violently right here.' The words ἀπεταντανιάσες and γυμνογυβέρη are otherwise not recorded, though there is an entry ἀποταντανιάω in the *Ἱστορικὸν λεξικὸν τῆς Νέας Ἑλληνικῆς* of the Academy of Athens, meaning 'to stretch'. The verse is omitted in the edition of Spyridon Lavriotes, and for this reason the two words are not included in Erich Trapp, *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität* (Vienna, 1994–) (LBG). The meaning of ἀπεταντανιάσες can be deduced from the context, from the entry in *Ἱστορικὸν λεξικὸν* and from the words *ταντανιάω* and *ταντανιάω* (shudder, in the second case a horse malady; see LBG): it must be an unkind way to express dying. The word γυμνογυβέρη must denote poverty and low social status; there is an entry γυβέρην in LBG with obscure meaning. I thank Prof. Erich Trapp for his help.

The elaboration of what a historical or imaginary person might have said at a given situation is the subject of *ethopoia*.<sup>30</sup> In this rhetorical *progymnasma* the author puts into the hero's mouth words that reveal his or her thoughts. Moreover, the style is supposed to characterize him or her. In the above mentioned case, David's words explain his motives, but do they characterize him? It is unlikely that Philippos' intention was to present the Old Testament king as rude or vulgar. The two last verses are rather a parody without further implications. Their function is simply to make the story more vivid through a touch of humour.

An example of fictional narration is the following: Sarx claims that it is possible for Soul to act without the Body. In order to support this idea, she brings up the example of dreams. To make the argument more vivid, she describes a particular, joyful *dream* – which is, incidentally, an interesting insight into the psyche of the Byzantine monk: suppose that in your dreams you went to a beautiful church in a faraway land; you attended the service and you met a dear friend. Concrete details serve to visualize this occurrence: marbles, mosaics, candles, oil lamps, honourable priests and singers who sing a sweet chant – an acoustic element:

μαρμάρων βλέπεις καλλονήν, διαφοράν ποικίλην,  
καὶ τῶν μουσῶν τὴν σύνθεσιν καὶ τῶν ψηφίδων αὐθις,  
κηρία ἄπτοντα πολλὰ ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ φατλία  
καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν εὐπρέπειαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας πᾶσαν,  
ἀνθρώπους ἱεροπρεπεῖς, ἐντίμους καὶ ὠραίους,  
ἢ δὲ τι μέλος ἐν αὐτῇ ᾄδοντας καὶ ὑμνοῦντας.

The encounter with the friend is 'put on stage' with some small but poignant details: you had not seen or heard of your friend for many years, but you wished to see his face; when you met him, you shared with him what you had in your mind:

εὐρεῖν δ' ἐκεῖ καὶ φίλον σου, ὃν πρὸ πολλῶν γε χρόνων  
οὐτ' εἶδες ἀλλ' οὐτ' ἤκουσας τί περὶ τούτου ὅλως,  
ἀλλ' εἶχες τούτου ἐφετῶς τὸ πρόσωπον ιδέσθαι·  
τούτῳ ἐκεῖ ὠμίλησας τὰ καταθύμιά σου.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See Hunger, *Literatur*, vol. 1, pp. 108–116.

<sup>31</sup> Book 5, vv. 2045–2050 and vv. 2051–2054: 'You see the beauty of the marbles, the variety, and the composition of the mosaics and the *tesserae*, many candles burning and oil-lamps as well, and all the further comeliness of the church, people beseming a sacred space, honourable and handsome, who are singing in this (church) a sweet chant and hymns'. and '(you dream) that you found a friend of yours there, whom you had not seen for many years, nor had you heard anything of him, but you wished to see his face; with him you shared what you had in your mind'.

## Conclusion

Didactic and literary are not contradictory in the *Dioptra*. It is the combination of both elements that explains the popularity of the text. The *Dioptra* is a didactic poem, whose purpose is to transmit an elementary theological education. The technique of personification entails two levels of teaching: the mistress being taught by her maid and the reader being taught by Philippos. The relationship between the body and the soul as parts of the human person belongs to a third level, that of symbolism. The interaction of three levels, author–audience, maid/teacher–mistress/pupil and body–soul, constitutes one of the most subtle components of the literary character of the *Dioptra*.

The embedded narrations, on the other hand, make some theological statements more concrete for the Psyche and the reader. What is more, the narrations involve a certain degree of fiction: the author creates characters and situations, in which he expresses his psyche and depicts the world he lives in.

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# PART V

## Books

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# Chapter 12

## The Perils of Travel:

### Mark the Monk and *Bodl. E.D. Clarke 15*

Marc Lauxtermann

*Bodl. E.D. Clarke 15* is a pocket-sized parchment manuscript: 102 × 88 mm. It consists of I + 257 folios (fol. I and 257 are flyleaves), and the quires are: 2 (2), 20 × 8 (162), 7 (8–1: 169), 10 × 8 (249), 7 (8–1: 256).<sup>1</sup> The manuscript is written in a neat and regular hand: the main text in minuscule script (*Perlschrift*), the rest in uncial script (*Auszeichnungsmajuskel*).<sup>2</sup> The manuscript is richly ornamented and decorated throughout and makes extensive use of gilded lettering.<sup>3</sup> It is a Psalter, and like many Psalters, the manuscript can be precisely dated because of the Easter tables found at the end. The date of ms. *Bodl. Clarke 15* is 1077–1078.

The manuscript contains a great number of unusual poems: at the beginning, on the first two leaves (fol. 1–2) and in the first quaternion (fol. 3–10); in the middle (at the end of the sixteenth quaternion, on fol. 129–130); and at the end, between the Psalms and the Odes (fol. 231). This is what the manuscript looks like:

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Gaisford, *Catalogus sive Notitia manuscriptorum qui a cel. E.D. Clarke comparati in bibliotheca Bodleiana adservantur: pars prior* (Oxford, 1812), pp. 57–61. Falconer Madan et al., *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford* (Oxford, 1897), vol. 4, p. 302 (no. 18377). Irmgard Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften: Oxford Bodleian Library* (3 vols, Stuttgart, 1977–1982), vol. 1, pp. 46–47 (no. 32) and plates 148–149 and 152–155, and vol. 3, 1, pp. 330–331. Georgi Parpulov, *Toward a History of Byzantine Psalters* (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Chicago, Illinois, 2004), pp. 183–187.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to thank Prof. Ernst Gamillscheg for kindly sending me the text of a lecture, 'Michael Panerges, Kopist und Notar im ausgehenden 11. Jahrhundert', which he gave at the seventh International Congress of Greek Palaeography in Madrid 2008; this paper will be published in the proceedings of the congress. In this paper Gamillscheg suggests that the hand of Michael Panerges, the scribe of Moscow, Univ. Library, *cod. gr.* 2 (a. 1072), can be detected in a number of late eleventh-century manuscripts, including *Bodl. Clarke 15*.

<sup>3</sup> Apart from crosses on steps, quatrefoils, illuminated headbands and other forms of ornamentation, the manuscript has a miniature on fol. 10<sup>v</sup>: according to Hutter, *Corpus*, vol. 1, pp. 46–47 and vol. 3, 1, pp. 330–331, the miniature is original, but having suffered badly from wear and tear, was redone in the early modern period; according to Ioannis Spatharakis, *Corpus of Dated Illuminated Greek Manuscripts to the year 1453* (2 vols, Leiden, 1981), vol. 1, p. 32 (no. 98), Otto Kresten (in Hutter, *Corpus*, vol. 3, 1, p. 330), and Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, p. 184, the miniature was added on an originally blank page in the early modern period.

Fol.	Contents	Incipit
1 <sup>r</sup>	Psellos, poem 1, vv. 262–268	
1 <sup>v</sup> –2 <sup>v</sup>	Psellos, poem 1, vv. 269–291	
3 <sup>r</sup> –5 <sup>r</sup>	στίχοι ἡρωικοὶ εἰς τὸ ψαλτήριον, 19 vv.	δέρικεο πᾶς σοφίης πολυήρατον ὄλβον ἐχούσης
5 <sup>v</sup> –7 <sup>r</sup>	dodecasyllables, without title, 30 vv.	ἡ δαυϊτικὴ τῶν μελισμάτων χάρις
7 <sup>r</sup>	Prayer of the scribe, 1 v.	εὐχοιο τῇδε τῷ γραφεῖ πᾶς τις ἄδων
7 <sup>v</sup> –9 <sup>r</sup>	dodecasyllables, without title, 30 vv.	ἴσως βλέπων τις τήνδε τὴν σοφὴν βίβλον
9 <sup>v</sup>	cross with two dodecasyllables around its beams	εὐθὺς πρὸς αὐταῖς ταῖς θύραις τοῦ πτυκτίου
10 <sup>r</sup>	blank	
10 <sup>v</sup>	miniature depicting David and Christ	
11 <sup>r</sup>	verse within an ornamental frame	Δαυιδ τὸ πρῶτον ἄσμα τῶν ψαλμῶν βάσις
11 <sup>r</sup> –129 <sup>v</sup>	Psalms 1–76 (plus metrical titles)	
129 <sup>v</sup>	στίχοι, 6 vv.	ἀρχὴς ἀπ' ἄκρις καὶ τέλους μέσον τόδε
130 <sup>r</sup>	ἱαμβοὶ ἕτεροι, 12 vv.	μέμνησο, Σάβα, τοῦ ταπεινοῦ σου τέκνου
130 <sup>r</sup>	dodecasyllables, without title, 3 vv.	σῶζις φυλάττων ὡς Θεὸς σωτήρ, Λόγε
130 <sup>v</sup>	blank	
131 <sup>r</sup> –230 <sup>r</sup>	Psalms 77–150 (plus metrical titles)	
230 <sup>r-v</sup>	Prayer of David = Psalm 151	
231 <sup>r</sup>	explanation of the word διάψαλμα	
231 <sup>v</sup>	4 verses within an ornamental frame	τὴν ψυχοτερπὴ τῶν γραφῶν κορωνίδα
232 <sup>r</sup> –254 <sup>r</sup>	Odes	
254 <sup>v</sup> –256 <sup>v</sup>	Easter tables	

A few words should be said about the history of the manuscript before discussing the highly interesting poems in it. Edward Clarke bought this particular manuscript, along with other manuscripts, including the famous Clarke Plato, on the island of Patmos in the year 1801.<sup>4</sup> The manuscript contains a note of possession at the bottom of folio 10<sup>v</sup>, beneath the miniature depicting David and Christ: καὶ τόδε πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις Παναγιώτου

<sup>4</sup> Anonymous [Ch. J. Blomfield], 'Review of Gaisford's Catalogue', *Museum Criticum*, 1 (1814): pp. 128–132, at 130 (repr. Christopher Stray (ed.), *Museum Criticum: Cambridge Classical Researches* (1814–1826), vol. 1 (Bristol, 2004), see the introduction, p. x). For the Greek manuscripts purchased by Edward Daniel Clarke, see his own account, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa* (8 vols, London, 1816–1818), vol. 3, pp. 68–72; vol. 4, p. 30; vol. 6, pp. 40–49; vol. 6, p. 96; and vol. 8, pp. 18–20 (for the Psalter, see vol. 6, p. 47); see also William Otter, *The Life and Remains of Edward Daniel Clarke professor of mineralogy at the University of Cambridge* (2 vols, London, 1825), vol. 2, pp. 152–153, 163, 168, 176–177, 178, 183–184, 187–188 and 236–244.

κεχαγιά δὲ τοῦ μεγάλου ἑρμηνέους (sic) τῆς βασιλείας τῶν Τουρκῶν. *Kehaya* (κεχαγιάς) is an Ottoman title. The μέγας ἑρμηνεύς is the great dragoman of the Sublime Porte. And Παναγιώτης can be identified as Panagiotis Nikousios, the first Greek to hold this important function between c. 1661 and 1673, who was to play an infamous role during the siege and subsequent surrender of Chandakas (Venetian Candia, nowadays Irakleio), in the *annus horribilis* 1669.<sup>5</sup> It is not known whether the manuscript entered the library of the monastery of St John at Patmos immediately after the death of Panagiotis Nikousios (1673), or later.<sup>6</sup> Nor is there any information on the whereabouts of the manuscript before c. 1661.

*Bodl. Clarke* 15 is unique among Byzantine Psalters for the amount of poetry, often highly personal, that it contains.<sup>7</sup> On folio 1<sup>r</sup> there is a poem dealing with the question what ψαλμὸς Δαυὶδ means: psalm of David or psalm to David? And the next poem, on folios 1<sup>v</sup>-2<sup>r</sup>, deals with the question what διάψαλμα ('musical interlude') stands for. These two texts derive from a long didactic poem by Psellos, in which he explains to Konstantinos IX Monomachos what the Psalms are all about.<sup>8</sup> This poem is found in a great number of manuscripts, which can be divided into two separate manuscript branches.<sup>9</sup> In his edition, my compatriot Westerink preferred the readings of one of these two manuscript branches for reasons that remain unclear. The Bodleian manuscript, which was produced when Psellos was still alive, offers exactly the readings of the manuscript branch that were implicitly rejected by Westerink – and although there is much truth in the adage '*recentiores non deteriores*', I suspect that Westerink would have rethought his editorial decision, had he been aware of the existence of this manuscript.

Some of the less personal poems in *Bodl. Clarke* 15 can be found in other manuscripts as well. The scribe's prayer on fol. 7<sup>r</sup>, εὐχοιο τῇδε τῷ γραφεῖ πᾶς τις ἄδων, is also found in *Par. gr.* 1630 (fourteenth century), fol. 195<sup>v</sup>.<sup>10</sup> The verse written within an ornamented

<sup>5</sup> The life and times of Panagiotis Nikousios still await a thorough study – but for a good introduction, see Gunnar Hering, 'Panagiotis Nikousios als Dragoman der kaiserlichen Gesandtschaft in Konstantinopel', *JÖB*, 44 (1994): pp. 143–178.

<sup>6</sup> For the library of Nikousios, see comte Léon Emmanuel de Laborde, *Athènes aux XV<sup>e</sup>, XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (2 vols, Paris, 1854), vol. 1, pp. 114–116, no. 2, who mentions a letter by Colbert to Nointel, dated 26 May 1674, requesting information on the fate of Nikousios' collection of manuscripts. Emil Jacobs, 'Johann Hartung zum Gedächtnis', in *Aus der Werkstatt. Den deutschen Bibliothekaren zu ihrer Tagung in Freiburg Pfingsten MCMXXXV, dargebracht von der Universitätsbibliothek* (Freiburg, 1925), pp. 87–97, at 93–95, speculates that Nikousios' collection may have been bought by his successor, Alexandros Mavrokordatos.

<sup>7</sup> For the text of most of the poems, see Gaisford, *Catalogus*, pp. 57–61. Some of the poems can be found in Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, pp. 183–187, 376–377 and 384–385.

<sup>8</sup> W 1.262–268 and 269–291.

<sup>9</sup> Westerink, *Poemata*, p. ix: mss. v (*Vat. Pal. gr.* 383), j<sup>x</sup> (*Athen.* 799), and j<sup>y</sup> (*Mosq. gr.* 388) differ significantly from the remaining manuscripts. *Bodl. Clarke* 15 offers the same text as these three mss.

<sup>10</sup> It was published by Jean-François Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca e codicibus regiis* (5 vols, Paris, 1829–1833; repr. Hildesheim, 1962), vol. 5, p. 166, no. 1 (who erroneously prints τῷδε instead of τῇδε, which is the reading of both manuscripts).

headpiece to Psalm 1 (a *pyle*) on fol. 11<sup>r</sup>, Δαυὶδ τὸ πρῶτον ἄσμα τῶν ψαλμῶν βάσις, is also found in three other Psalters:<sup>11</sup> in *Dumbarton Oaks* 3 (a. 1084), fol. 6<sup>r</sup>, below a miniature that depicts David in the process of writing down the Psalter, with a lectern in front of him;<sup>12</sup> in *Vat. Barb. gr.* 320 (late eleventh century), fol. 2<sup>r</sup>, below a miniature that shows David and Melodia;<sup>13</sup> and in the Berlin Psalter (late eleventh century), fol. 3<sup>r</sup>, in a headpiece to Psalm 1, in a square that encloses a Greek cross with this inscription.<sup>14</sup> The book epigram in the middle of the manuscript, at fol. 129<sup>v</sup>, ἀρχῆς ἀπ' ἄκρης καὶ τέλους μέσον τόδε, is also found in another Psalter, *Vat. gr.* 342 (a. 1087–1088), fol. 133<sup>v</sup>.<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to note that *Bodl. Clarke* 15 shares so much of its poetic material with contemporary Psalters. Does this indicate that all these Psalters were produced in one and the same atelier, and perhaps even by one and the same scribe?<sup>16</sup> Or were these epigrams copied from one volume into another? Or did they circulate in small collections of Psalter epigrams, from which rich Byzantines could choose, on spec as it were, when they commissioned a lavishly decorated Psalter?<sup>17</sup> These are admittedly difficult questions, and it is not within my competence to provide answers, as I am neither an art historian nor a palaeographer.

The metrical titles that accompany the 150 psalms in *Bodl. Clarke* 15, summarize the contents of the psalms and are written in the margins of the manuscript at the beginning of each corresponding psalm. These metrical titles can be found in other manuscripts as well. These manuscripts can be divided into two groups: *Vat. gr.* 1823 (fourteenth century) and an apograph by Allatius, *Barb. gr.* 74 (seventeenth century), on the one hand, and manuscripts containing Pseudo-Psellos 54, *Commentarius in Psalmos*, namely: *Athous Vatop.* 9 (fifteenth century), *Valllicell.* C 4 (sixteenth century) and *Const. Metochion* 773 (late sixteenth century), on the other. The text of these metrical titles has been published twice, in the Psellos edition of Westerink and in a study by Ciccolella on Byzantine anacreontics (octosyllables). Westerink used the pseudo-Psellian

<sup>11</sup> Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, p. 255 (D1, no. 35).

<sup>12</sup> Sirarpie Der Nersessian, 'A Psalter and New Testament manuscript at Dumbarton Oaks', *DOP*, 19 (1965): pp. 153–183, at 157, and Anthony Cutler, *The Aristocratic Psalters in Byzantium* (Paris, 1984), pp. 91–98 (no. 51) and figs 318–339: see fig. 322.

<sup>13</sup> Cutler, *Aristocratic Psalters*, pp. 80–83 (no. 44) and figs 287–293: see fig. 290.

<sup>14</sup> This manuscript, *Berol. Univ. cod.* 3807, is nowadays lost. See Georg Stuhlfauth, 'A Greek Psalter with Byzantine Miniatures', *ArtBull.* 15 (1933): pp. 311–326, and Cutler, *Aristocratic Psalters*, pp. 32–34 (no. 19) and figs 99–108: see fig. 103.

<sup>15</sup> Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, 'Confessione di fede di Michele categumeno del monastero fondato da Michele Attaliatē', *OCP*, 21 (1955): pp. 265–273, at 273 (no. 4) (repr. in Silvio Giuseppe Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina* (2 vols, Bari, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 609–617, at 617). *Vat. gr.* 342 has an additional verse at the end of this epigram.

<sup>16</sup> This is what Gamillscheg, 'Michael Panerges', attempts to prove. Whereas Gamillscheg attributes most of the Psalters mentioned in the main text to just one scribe, Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters, passim*, distinguishes various hands.

<sup>17</sup> This is what Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, p. 187, argues; he refers to Ivan Duichev Centre ms. 389, where we find a series of Psalter epigrams on fol. 1<sup>r</sup>: see *ibid.*, pp. 23–24, no. 3.

manuscripts, Ciccolella the other two.<sup>18</sup> As these two editions appeared simultaneously, the two editors were not aware of each other's work. Nor had they any knowledge of *Bodl. Clarke* 15. As I hope to prove in *Appendix II*, *Bodl. Clarke* 15 is not the archetype of the manuscript tradition, but is an apograph of the poet's master copy, whereas the manuscripts used by Westerink and Ciccolella are at several removes from the original.

Finally, the long book epigram on fols. 5<sup>v</sup>–7<sup>r</sup> (inc. ἡ δαυτικὴ τῶν μελισμάτων χάρις) is also found in *Athen.* 16 (fourteenth century), fols. 6<sup>v</sup>–7<sup>v</sup>,<sup>19</sup> and in *Vindob. Theol. gr.* 175 (sixteenth century), fol. 6<sup>r</sup>–v.<sup>20</sup> In the latter manuscript, the epigram is ascribed to a certain Μάρκος μοναχός, Mark the Monk, a previously unknown author. Likewise, in the manuscripts used by Ciccolella for her edition, the metrical titles that accompany the psalms are ascribed to this Mark the Monk (see n. 18).

This name is found twice in our manuscript, *Bodl. Clarke* 15. In the first text the author calls himself God's servant Mark: τεῷ θεράποντί γε Μάρκῳ. In the second text he is painfully humble and depicts himself as the lowest of the low, the worst monk ever: τάλας πενιχρὸς οἰκτρὸς ἡττελισμένος / φαῦλος πιναρὸς καρδίαν ἐστιγμένος / Μάρκος ταπεινὸς ἐσχατος μονοτρόπων.<sup>21</sup> On fol. 130<sup>r</sup> (see *Appendix I*) we find the name of the spiritual father of Mark, probably the abbot of the monastery he is a member of: Sabas.<sup>22</sup> Both names are not to be found in the excellent online database of the *Prosopography*

<sup>18</sup> W, pp. 327–390. Federica Ciccolella, 'Carmi anacreontici bizantini', *BollClass* III/12, (1991): pp. 49–68, at 51–54. In *Vat. gr.* 1823 (and its apograph, *Barb. gr.* 74), the title of the poem is: στίχοι ἀνακρεόντειοι Μάρκου μοναχοῦ εἰς τὰς ἐπιγραφὰς τῶν ψαλμῶν.

<sup>19</sup> For a description of the manuscript, see Cutler, *Aristocratic Psalters*, pp. 18–19 (no. 4) and figs. 19–21. The poem misses its two last verses in *Athen. gr.* 16: Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, pp. 384–385 (no. 37).

<sup>20</sup> Herbert Hunger, Otto Kresten and Christian Hannick, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek* 3, 2: *Codices theologici* 101–200 (Vienna, 1984), pp. 311–314, at 312 (στίχοι ἱαμβικοὶ Μάρκου μοναχοῦ εἰς τὸ ψαλτήριον, 29 vv. [which means that one verse must be missing]).

<sup>21</sup> For the two quotes, see Gaisford, *Catalogus*, p. 58 (v. 13) and 59 (vv. 27–30). *Berol. gr.* 379 (a. 1077), a Gospel Book, was copied by a namesake of Mark the Monk: Μάρκος ἁμαρτωλὸς μοναχὸς καὶ ξένος, who at the beginning of the Gospel according to Matthew noted: ζῆται πρῶτον τὸν ἑμφύτον φόβον ἐμπόνως καὶ τότε ἔνδον εὐρήσεις τὸν ἔμπυρον λόγον τὸν διδάσκοντα ἄνθρωπον γνῶσιν: Carolus de Boor, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin. Elfte Band. Verzeichniss der griechischen Handschriften* (Berlin, 1897), vol. 2, pp. 220–221. Although this personal statement of faith (incidentally, a quote from Evagrius' Πρὸς Εὐλόγιον, PG 79, col. 1120) sounds like something 'my' Mark the Monk could have written, the two should not be confused: the one in Berlin is an ordinary scribe, and the one in Oxford commissioned someone else to copy a Psalter for him.

<sup>22</sup> It is probably purely coincidental that a slightly later Psalter (c. 1100), *Athous Dion.* 65, contains a series of unusual miniatures and verses (taken from Nikephoros Ouranos' catanyctic alphabet), all of them highly idiosyncratic and personal, and produced on behalf of a monk called Sabas: see Rainer Stichel, *Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild spät- und nachbyzantinischer Vergänglichkeitsdarstellungen* (Vienna, 1971), pp. 70–73, and Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, pp. 110–117.

of the Byzantine World, 1025–1102.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, I have not been able to detect any direct reference to, or indirect indication of, the monastery where Sabas and Mark shared their lives in Christ.

However, if we read the paratexts<sup>24</sup> scattered throughout the manuscript carefully, we may come to know this Mark the Monk a little better and to understand his motives for commissioning what must have been a quite expensive manuscript. Apart from the things that are still there, such as the leaves of parchment, the illustrations, the use of golden ink, and the beautiful script, one of the poems at the beginning of the manuscript informs us that it had clasps of gilt silver and was wrapped in a purple silk cover.<sup>25</sup> This is definitely an object with a price tag attached to it. It is worth noting, however, that Mark the Monk nowhere states that he is donating this de luxe manuscript to his own monastery or to another pious foundation. It is and it remains his manuscript, with the emphasis on the word 'his'. It is a personal manuscript. That is also why this manuscript has more paratexts, and some of them of a quite confidential nature, than any Psalter known to me.<sup>26</sup> Whatever one may think of the poetry, it is doubtless the work of a highbrow author and it must have cost him many years of thorough linguistic training to attain the stylistic level of pseudo-homeric and pseudo-attic Greek he displays in his poems, and seemingly without any effort. The highbrow nature of his poetry, along with the high price tag attached to this manuscript, makes it abundantly clear that Mark the Monk is not just any monk, but a member of the elite. He may call himself *τάλας, πενιχρός, οἰκτρός, ἡὑτελισμένος, φαῦλος, πιναρός, καρδίαν ἐστιγμένος, ταπεινός, ἔσχατος μονοτρόπων*, but we know better: he is as elite and upper class as they come.

This does not necessarily mean that he is not sincere and that this is all a display of false modesty. Like all Byzantines, Mark the Monk will have longed for spiritual redemption and one of the reasons why he will have decided to enter the monastic life surely must have been a sincere concern for his own soul's salvation and the life hereafter. Members of the Byzantine elite donned the habit basically for three reasons: first, a true and sincere religious vocation; second, a great anxiety on the deathbed as

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/>.

<sup>24</sup> 'Paratext' is the term used by Gérard Genette for what most medievalists would call 'marginalia': *Seuils* (Paris, 1987), translated into English: *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1997). In modern editions, paratexts are things like the title page, the preface, the footnotes, the illustrations, the blurb on the back cover. In medieval manuscripts, paratexts include a wide range of scribbblings, such as colophon texts, marginal annotations, marks of possession, dedicatory epigrams, etcetera. Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2 (= *Seuils*, p. 8), quotes Philippe Lejeune who defines the paratext as 'a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one's whole reading of the text': *Le pacte autobiographique* (Paris, 1975), p. 45. See the contributions of Bentein and Demoen in this volume.

<sup>25</sup> Gaisford, *Catalogus*, pp. 59–60 (vv. 1–12).

<sup>26</sup> For the Psalter used for private devotional purposes, see Georgi Parpulov, 'The Psalms and Personal Piety in Byzantium', in Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson (eds), *The Old Testament in Byzantium* (Washington, D.C., 2009). I would like to thank my colleague Georgi Parpulov for kindly sending a copy of his paper in advance of publication.



to what would happen next; and third, political turbulence and fear of the wrath of the emperor or other parties. The first motive, that of true vocation, is less common than our sources want us to believe. The second motive, the spasms of death, becomes extremely popular after the defeat of iconoclasm and the triumph of monasticism as the true embodiment of Orthodoxy. And the third motive, that of creating a safe haven in difficult times, is reflected in the growth of small private religious foundations in the middle Byzantine period.

Although it is obviously impossible to fathom the psychological depths and idiosyncrasies of persons long dead, I would say that political turmoil of some kind certainly contributed to Mark's decision to don the habit. Let us look at the book epigram on fol. 4<sup>v</sup>–5<sup>r</sup>, vv. 12–19:

ἀλλὰ κύνιστε μέγιστε μεγασθενὲς ἄφθιτε σῶτερ,  
αὐτὸς ἄρ' ἡγεμόνευε τεῷ θεράποντί γε Μάρκῳ  
ἀτρεκέος βιότοιο κατὰ στίβον ὡς ἀγορεύει  
πυκτίδος εὐφραδέως ἱερὸν μέλος ἐκ σέθεν αἰγλῆς  
Δαυίδου πινυτῆτι θεηγορήσιν ἀρίστου·  
αὐτὰρ δ' ἀμφιέποντα δίδου περικαλλέα δῶρα  
οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα καὶ ὄλβιον ἄμβροτον αὐθις  
χώρον ἀριπρεπέα ξυνὸν οἷς ἐσάωσας ἐόντα.<sup>27</sup>

In this passage, Mark prays to God Almighty and beseeches him to 'guide him along the path of true life' while he is declaiming the Psalms of David from this manuscript (πυκτίδος), and to 'grant him the splendid gifts that will accompany him, namely the starry heavens and, on his return (αὐθις), the bright place shared with others, prosperous and immortal, wherewith Thou savest mortal beings'. The bright place shared with others, of course, is Mark's monastery. But what about the starry heavens? And why should God 'guide (Mark)'? The clue is the word ἡγεμόνευε, which indicates that the text, at least its conclusion (vv. 12–19), falls into the category of ἐνόδια, prayers said when one goes on a journey. Similar hexametric *enodia* can be found in the work of Gregorios of Nazianze and Ioannes Geometres.<sup>28</sup>

The motive of the journey recurs at the end of the book epigram on fol. 7<sup>v</sup>–9<sup>r</sup>, vv. 25–30:

<sup>27</sup> Gaisford, *Catalogus*, p. 58. Perhaps we should read in v. 16 πινυτῆ τε.

<sup>28</sup> Greg. Naz. I.1.36–38, II.1.3 and 22a (PG 37, 518–522, 1020–21 and 1281): see Kristoffel Demoen, 'The Paradigmatic Prayer in Gregory Nazianzen', *Studia Patristica*, 32 (1997): pp. 96–101, at 96 and 100–101. Geometres no. 65: E.M. van Opstall (ed.), *Jean Géomètre, Poèmes en hexamètres et en distiques élégiaques* (Leiden/Boston, 2008), pp. 225–239.

ὄλον δὲ τὸν νοῦν ἐμβαθύννας τοῖς ἔσω  
 τοὺς ψυχοκερδεῖς θηράσει μόνον λόγους  
 καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς ἐνδιατρήσει πλέον  
 τρυγῶν ἀληθῶς ψυχικὴν σωτηρίαν  
 καὶ τὴν ἄνω φέρουσιν ἀπλανῆ τρίβον  
 εὐθυβόλῳ μάλιστα βαδίζων τάχει.<sup>29</sup>

Here we read that the true believer, when he reads and sings the Psalter, will reap spiritual salvation and, I quote, ‘will most definitely walk the path that leads to heaven, without erring and with determined pace’. Although Mark the Monk obviously refers here to a spiritual journey, his choice of vocabulary seems to suggest that the prospect of an actual journey is also on his mind.

Halfway through the Psalter we encounter yet another poem by Mark the Monk: this time he is praying to his spiritual father Sabas, probably the abbot of the monastery he is living in. He asks him to take care of him, just as the good shepherd did, when he looked for the sheep that had gone astray (see Appendix I). This prayer is without parallel in the rest of Byzantine poetry and bears witness, to say the least, to a rather agitated state of mind. The important thing to note is that Mark the Monk once again makes use of metaphors and similes that seem to indicate that he is on his way to somewhere. He is lost. He has wandered off just as the lamb inadvertently wandered off from its herd and had to be rescued by the good shepherd. It is clear that Mark the Monk wants to return to the flock. But where has he gone? Where is this lamb of God?

At this point, we should remember the size of the manuscript. As stated above, the manuscript is pocket-sized: in other words, ideal to take with one when travelling.<sup>30</sup> And like most Psalters, it is not a pious donation to some monastery or church, but a personal devotional object. It is a manuscript that remained in the possession of Mark the Monk as long as he lived, and which he took with him when he went on a journey from which he feared he would never return. We will never know on which mission poor Mark the Monk was sent, nor what he feared exactly – but we can come up with some reasonable guesses. In the year 1077–1078, when the manuscript was produced, the Byzantine Empire had indeed become very dangerous to travel through: the Seljuk Turks were advancing, Norman mercenaries were doing the things they were good at, Botaneiates and Bryennios were fighting for power while Michael VII could do no more than wait to see who would replace him, and somewhere in the dim background lurked the sinister figure of Alexios Komnenos, biding his time, waiting for the right opportunity to strike with all his might. These were dangerous times indeed, and although we will never

<sup>29</sup> Gaisford, *Catalogus*, p. 60; Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, pp. 183–184, no. 1. The ms. reads *θηράσω* in v. 26.

<sup>30</sup> On pocket-sized Psalters for personal use, see Annemarie Weyl Carr, ‘Diminutive Byzantine Manuscripts’, *Codices Manuscripti*, 6 (1980): pp. 130–161 (repr. in Annemarie Weyl Carr, *Cyprus and the Devotional Arts of Byzantium in the Era of the Crusades* (Aldershot, 2005), no. V), and John Lowden, ‘Observations on Illustrated Byzantine Psalters’, *ArtBull*, 70 (1988): pp. 242–260.



know what Mark the Monk was afraid of, the manuscript is a splendid testimony to the anxieties of members of the ruling class at the time. They stood to lose everything, depending on who would win the struggle for power, and some of them, including Mark the Monk, must have thought that it was wiser under these circumstances to invest their money in religious foundations and buy their salvation at a bargain price.

However, appearances may be deceptive. In the book epigram on fols. 7<sup>v</sup>–9<sup>r</sup>, Mark the Monk tries to head off a possible criticism: what do golden ink, fine parchment, splendid calligraphy, gilt silver clasps and a silk cover profit the ascetic? The answer to this criticism is that those advanced in ascesis, firstly, do not dwell on the material side of things, but look beyond appearances and admire the creator of all the beauties of the earth; and secondly, perceive a deeper meaning under the surface of things and contemplate the Psalter not as an object, but as a source of wisdom and spiritual redemption.<sup>31</sup> As this is a personal manuscript, it is hardly likely that anyone else than Mark the Monk himself could have read this *nihil obstat*. It is almost as if he was reminding himself what the ulterior motives for commissioning this lavishly ornamented manuscript had been – as if he suspected that if people were to question the sincerity of his monastic vocation, he would be at a loss. To conclude, the manuscript he commissioned is emblematic of the dire straits he found himself in – this lamb of God, lost in the wilderness, in urgent need of spiritual guidance, and unsure whether he would ever capitalize on his religious investment and return to ‘the bright place shared with others, prosperous and immortal’, while ‘walking the path that leads to heaven, without erring and with determined pace’, guided by ‘the starry heavens’.

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<sup>31</sup> Gaisford, *Catalogus*, pp. 59–60.

## Appendix I

*Prayers by Mark the Monk on fol. 130<sup>r</sup>*

ἱαμβοὶ ἕτεροι  
 Μέμνησο, Σάβα, τοῦ ταπεινοῦ σου τέκνου·  
 ναὶ πάτερ αἰτῶ, μὴ λελήσῃ τοῦ τέκνου·  
 ἐν σοὶ πρόβατον πεπλανημένον πέλει·  
 μέθες τὰ λοιπά, τοῦτο συντόνως δίφα·  
 ἔλκυσσον εὐχαῖς ἐξ ἐρημαίων λόφων  
 ψυχὴν ταπεινὴν, πάμπαν ἡπορημένην,  
 (ἔργον δὲ πάντως τοῦτ' ἀρίστου ποιμένος)  
 ὄλῃν βέβηλον, ἐσπιλωμένην ὄλῃν,  
 ὄλῃν ὁδοῦσι τοῦ πλάνου δεδηγμένην·  
 τὸ θρέμμα σώσαι χριστομιμήτῳ τρόπῳ  
 θηρσὶν φονῶσιν εἰς βορὰν εἰλημμένον·  
 δῶσει Θεὸς σοὶ τὴν χάριν αἰτουμένῳ:-

Σῶζοις φυλάττων ὡς Θεὸς σωτήρ, Λόγε,  
 σὸν οἰκέτην μέν, πατέρα δέ μου φίλον,  
 Σάβα ταπεινοῦ σῶν ὁμώνυμον φίλων:-<sup>32</sup>

*Other iambs*

*Remember, Sabas, your humble son: nay father, I beseech you, do not forget your child. He is a sheep in your care and he has wandered away. Leave the rest, look for this [sheep] eagerly: and with your prayers draw this soul to you from the desolate hills (such is surely the work of a good shepherd) – this humble soul, totally lost, wholly impure, wholly stained, wholly gnawed at by the teeth of the deceiver [that is, the devil]. Follow the example of Christ and rescue this creature from the fate of being devoured by bloodthirsty beasts. If you ask for it, God will grant it to you.*

<sup>32</sup> As these two poems cannot be found in Gaisford, *Catalogus*, I am publishing them here. The *editio princeps* is that of Parpulov, *Byzantine Psalters*, p. 184, no. 3, who, however, brackets these two poems together as if they form one text, and places verse 7 after verse 9. ἐξ ἐρημαίων λόφων (v. 5) is a quote from Ioannes Damaskenos' iambic canon on Christmas: August Nauck (ed.), 'Ioannis Damasceni Canones Iambici cum commentario et indice verborum', *Mélanges Gréco-Romains, tirés du Bulletin de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St-Petersbourg*, 6 (1894), pp. 199–223, at 203 (ode 8, strophe 3, line 112).

*As God the Saviour, may you, Christ, save and protect your servant and my dear father, the namesake of your friends of the humble Sabas [that is, the Sabaites].*<sup>33</sup>

## Appendix II

### *The Manuscript Tradition of Mark the Monk's Titles of the Psalms*

I have compared the readings of ms. *Bodl. Clarke* 15 (C) with those of *Vat. gr.* 1823 as reported by Ciccolella (V) and those of the Ps.-Psellos manuscripts as reported by Westerink (P). For the numbering of the verses, see Westerink's edition. Please note that, as ms. C nowadays misses a folio between fols. 169 and 170, there is a lacuna between Psalms 102:18 and 103:9 – which means that ms. C in its present state does not have verse 103.

C and P offer better readings than V in vv. 5, 39, 66, 72, 76, 94, 108, 120, 121, 122 and 149, and offer readings that are as good or as bad as V in vv. 14, 63, 86, 119, 139 and 144. A consistent error of ms. V is to read forms of *προκαλῶ* rather than *προσκαλῶ* (vv. 71, 112, 116). For a reason that is not clear to me, ms. V changes *Χριστός* into *Θεός* in vv. 8, 47, 98, 110, and *Θεός* into *Χριστός* in v. 99.

C and V offer better readings than P in vv. 7, 16, 20, 66, 85, 114 and 124, and offer readings that are as good or as bad as P in vv. 48, 50, 105, 113 and 130.

C has three mistakes: omission of the article *ἡ* in v. 25, *πᾶς* instead of *ἅπας* in v. 31, and *δεήσεις* instead of *δεήσει* in v. 119. C has two excellent readings: v. 72 *ἐπ' ἀσεβῶν εὐπραγία / μακροθυμία Θεοῦ τε / νοῦς ἀσθενῶν ταῦτα λέγει*, where P reads *μακροθυμία δεσπότης* and V offers a corrupted and truncated version: *ἀπ' ἀσεβῶν εὐπραγία, μακροθυμία δεσπότης* (without the third octosyllable), and v. 111 *Χριστὸς διδάσκει, καὶ λόγους / ἅπας ζωῆς ἀρνέσθω*, while P and V offer *Χριστὸς διδάσκει, ζωῆς οὖν / λόγους πᾶς τις ἀρνέσθω* (P) / *ἀρνεῖσθω* (V) (the version of C is preferable for metrical reasons: the poet avoids accents on the third metrical position).

V misses verse 59 and the end of verse 72. P misses verses 45 and 77, and reverses the order of verses 141 and 142.

As we see, all three sources have their peculiarities and their idiosyncratic readings, but the difference between C on the one hand and V and P on the other is that C is the only manuscript to transmit true readings not shared by the two others, whereas V's and P's readings, when not backed up by C, always turn out to be false. Since idiosyncratic true readings are *prima facie* proof of independence, it follows that C must belong to a different branch of the manuscript tradition. As for V and P, since their readings diverge

<sup>33</sup> I must confess that I do not fully understand line 3 of the second poem. What is the precise name of Mark the Monk's spiritual father: *Σάβας* or *Σαβαΐτης* or both? One of the enemies of Psellos is called *Σαββαΐτης*, see W 21, and the introduction by Westerink, Psellos, *Poemata*, pp. 258–259: was this a commonly accepted nickname in Psellos' time, or was it his own invention? And did it still mean a monk from the Great Lavra of St Sabas (a Sabaites), or was it used for any monk from the East, or, *tout court*, for any monk regardless of the monastery he was living in?

widely, they must be at several removes from their common ancestor, a manuscript that shared neither C's true readings (72, 111) nor C's false readings (25, 31, 119).

The interesting thing is that this hypothetical manuscript, the ultimate source of V and P, obviously must have mentioned Mark the Monk as the author of the *Titles of the Psalms*, since V explicitly attributes these verses to him. I must admit that my initial thought, when I discovered C and saw its intimate relation to Mark the Monk, was that C had to be the archetype of the manuscript tradition: otherwise, how do we explain the attribution in V of these obscure verses to this obscure author? Who would remember in the fourteenth century (the date of V) an otherwise totally unknown author by the name of Mark the Monk? The ascription in P of these verses to Psellos, although incorrect, is understandable because he has written a number of texts on the Psalms and has been credited with the authorship of many more. But Mark the Monk is not an obvious choice. It cannot have been a wild guess by the scribe of V.

This is how I think all the pieces of evidence fit together. The scribe of C, who had been commissioned by Mark the Monk to produce a de luxe manuscript for his personal needs, was asked to insert the texts of verses written by the same Mark at the beginning of each psalm. While copying these texts, he made three silly mistakes (25, 31, 119). Mark the Monk may have given the scribe a few loose sheets that contained a copy of his *Verses on the Psalms*, or may have lent him a personal manuscript containing his literary works. Either way, at a certain point in time, another scribe had access to the personal papers of Mark the Monk and copied the *Titles of the Psalms* with an explicit ascription to Mark the Monk and with two false readings (72, 111). It is this manuscript that is the ultimate source of V and P, though sorely mutilated and corrupted in various intermediary manuscripts.

# Chapitre 13

## Poésies à la marge, réflexions personnelles?

### Quelques observations sur les poésies du *Parisinus graecus* 1711

Paolo Odorico

#### Introduction

Si, au cours des trente dernières années, les études sur la littérature byzantine ont énormément progressé, si de nouvelles méthodes ont été élaborées, si de nouvelles réflexions ont trouvé leur espace en ce qui concerne l'usage de cette littérature, sa fonction dans la société, les buts de cette production et les façons de l'aborder, il n'en reste pas moins que les études sur la poésie constituent un chantier plutôt jeune, ouvert grâce aux efforts de chercheurs qui, comme Wolfram Hörandner, ne se sont pas épargnés en ce sens. Cependant, les publications récentes d'Actes de colloques, de tables rondes, d'études collectives ayant pour sujet la poésie et l'épigramme, montrent davantage ce qui reste à faire, que les progrès de la discipline, et elles font plus apparaître l'ampleur du sujet qu'elles ne marquent un nouveau point de départ et un détachement de la tradition classique ou de la sensibilité moderne, ces deux obstacles majeurs à la compréhension du phénomène poétique à Byzance.<sup>1</sup>

Il se peut, bien sûr, que nous ayons plus d'attentes esthétiques et fonctionnelles lorsque nous étudions la poésie, que lorsque nous nous penchons sur l'hagiographie ou même sur l'historiographie, mais notre manque de compréhension de cette production poétique derive aussi du fait que pour le public d'aujourd'hui, la poésie représente un espace d'expression personnelle, celui de l'innovation et de l'expérimentation, de l'originalité et de la créativité, toutes conceptions qui n'entraient guère dans le cadre mental d'un Byzantin et qui lui auraient même répugné. Le chercheur qui s'attache alors à l'œuvre poétique byzantine reste profondément déçu, car il se trouve face à une

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<sup>1</sup> Je me limite à signaler les volumes collectifs suivants: Wolfram Hörandner et Michael Grünbart (éds), *L'épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique: projets actuels et questions de méthodologie* (Paris, 2003); Wolfram Hörandner et Andreas Rhoby (éd.), *Die kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme, Akten des internationalen Workshop Wien, 1.-2. Dezember, 2006* (Vienne, 2008); Paolo Odorico, Panagiotis Agapitos et Martin Hinterberger (éd.), « *Doux Remède* »: *Poésie et poétique à Byzance* (Paris, 2008). Ces volumes comportent une riche bibliographie. Parmi les publications à caractère général les plus récentes, je me borne à signaler Marc D. Lauxtermann, *The Spring of Rhythm. An Essay on the Political Verse and Other Byzantine Metres* (Vienne, 1999); Marc D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres, Texts and Contexts*, vol. 1 (Vienne, 2003).

production extrêmement traditionnelle, peu novatrice, répétitive, qui en apparence ne sert pas à exprimer la personnalité de ses auteurs, contrairement à ce que nous imaginons des poésies classique, moderne, ou encore médiévale occidentale. Il se peut, évidemment, que nous n'ayons pas posé à cette production byzantine les questions appropriées, suivant les processus mentaux de leurs auteurs, et que nous ne nous soyons pas interrogés sur des questions de fond, comme par exemple, celles de la nature de cette poésie, du type de littérature dans lequel elle s'inscrit et de son usage.

Je n'ai nullement l'intention de m'engager dans un débat si vaste qu'il devrait faire l'objet de recherches collectives, et encore moins la prétention d'essayer de lui apporter une réponse quelconque. Je me bornerai à prendre en considération un aspect très marginal de cette production, aspect qui toutefois peut se montrer fort révélateur des attentes que les gens de lettres confiaient à ce genre littéraire, et je m'intéresserai à un morceau poétique assez insignifiant qui aurait largement pu passer inaperçu, mais qui – peut-être – pourrait représenter le point de départ d'une plus large investigation. Les quelques couplets en question ne sont que des *marginalia*, notes de lecture ou commentaires écrits à la marge des manuscrits, qui sont en général méprisables (et méprisés) en raison de la banalité qui les caractérise.

## Le Manuscrit

Les vers sur lesquels je porterai mon attention se trouvent dans une page du codex *Parisinus graecus* 1711, qui contient l'un des recueils les plus importants écrits par les historiens byzantins de l'époque moyenne et dont il est, pour certains textes, le seul témoin. Etant donné qu'il a été récemment analysé par Filippo Ronconi, dans le cadre d'une recherche sur ce manuscrit menée à l'EHESS, je me limite à en reprendre les conclusions.<sup>2</sup>

Au X<sup>ième</sup> siècle un recueil historique avait été composé, probablement par un certain Léon Grammatikos, qui avait aussi complété une *Chronique* portant sur les empereurs récents, mise à jour jusqu'au règne de Romain I<sup>ier</sup> Lécapène. Ce recueil comprenait la *Chronique* de Théophane, le *Scriptor incertus de Leone Armenio*, et justement la *Chronique des souverains récents*. Environ un siècle plus tard, un homme instruit, dont nous ne connaissons pas le nom, reprit le travail entamé par Léon Grammatikos, en recopiant tout le manuscrit et en ajoutant une première partie comprenant la *Chronique* de Georges le Syncelle au début du manuscrit, et la *Vie d'Alexandre le Grand* à la fin: il transforma ainsi ce document censé représenter l'histoire byzantine des IX<sup>ième</sup> et X<sup>ième</sup> siècles, en une sorte de somme sur l'histoire de l'humanité. Cet ouvrage fut souvent utilisé, et cent ans après, vers la moitié du XII<sup>ième</sup> siècle, deux lecteurs qui travaillaient ensemble l'enrichirent, au début du codex, de la *Chronique* de Nicéphore,

<sup>2</sup> L'analyse effectuée par Filippo Ronconi, *Juxtaposition/assemblage de textes et histoire de la tradition: le cas du Paris. gr. 1711*, a été présentée lors du VII<sup>ième</sup> Colloque International de Paléographie grecque (Madrid/Salamanque, 15–20 septembre 2008), dont les actes sont en cours de publication.

et restaurèrent certaines parties abîmées. Pendant sa longue vie, le manuscrit devint un dépôt de mémoires historiques car de nouveau, plusieurs lecteurs l'augmentèrent de brèves notations, jusqu'au XVI<sup>ième</sup> siècle. Si l'on observe la construction par 'blocs' du manuscrit, il semble évident que le copiste anonyme travaillant à la moitié du XI<sup>ième</sup> siècle l'a composé en y ajoutant des matériaux.

C'est ainsi qu'à la page 393<sup>v</sup> finit la *Chronique des souverains récents*, mise à jour par Léon Grammatikos, et que l'ouvrage suivant, la *Vie d'Alexandre le Grand*, commence à la page 395.

Portons notre attention sur la fin du bloc contenant les différentes chroniques, juste avant la *Vie d'Alexandre*. Ce passage marque certainement la conclusion d'une partie du manuscrit, à laquelle par la suite a été ajouté un autre bloc relatant les exploits du roi macédonien. C'est justement entre ces deux parties que se trouve un cahier composé d'une feuille et d'un bi-folio: ce petit cahier est occupé par les dernières lignes de la *Chronique des souverains récents* (fol. 393<sup>v</sup>), suivie d'une souscription de Léon Grammatikos recopiée par le compilateur anonyme, et de deux autres souscriptions (voir fig. 1). La page suivante, fol. 394<sup>r</sup>, est blanche mais le verso, ultime page de cette partie 'ancienne' du manuscrit (voir fig. 2), recèle des vers qui feront l'objet de mon étude.

Venons-en à l'histoire récente: dans son édition du Pseudo-Callisthène, Carolus Müller avait remarqué que les trois premiers vers portaient sur Ptolémée. Il en avait donc fait la transcription et avait ajouté celle des autres.<sup>3</sup> Quelques années plus tard, Edme Cougny reprit<sup>4</sup> ce texte sans rien y adjoindre de plus, sinon un commentaire<sup>5</sup> dans lequel il se méprend à propos du manuscrit et où il fait, en outre, une remarque désagréable: '*pessimum quidem carmen et vix dignum quod in hac sylloge* (i.e. la sienne) *locum haberet*'.

<sup>3</sup> Dans F. Dübner et C. Müller (éd.), *Arriani Anabasis et Indica* (Paris, 1846), vol. 3, p. XXVII.

<sup>4</sup> E. Cougny (éd.), *Anthologiae Graecae Appendix. Epigrammatis addenda. Epigrammatum Anthologiae Palatinae cum Planudeis et Appendice Nova* (Paris, 1890), vol. 3, n° 256d et 256e.

<sup>5</sup> Cougny, *Appendix*, p. 609.





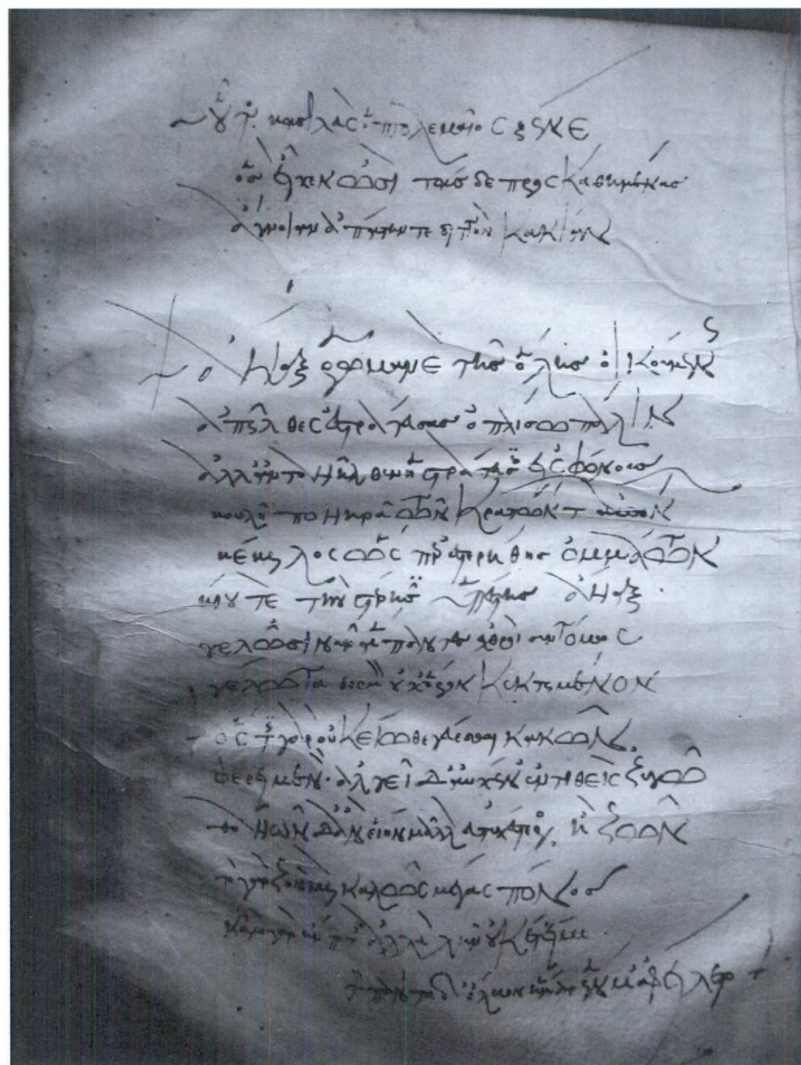


Figure 13.2 *Par. gr.* 1711, fol. 394<sup>v</sup>. Bibliothèque nationale de France

Quarante ans après Müller, en publiant la *Chronique* de Théophane, de Boor avait publié les poèmes et les souscriptions<sup>6</sup> sans faire référence à l'édition précédente. Les textes qu'il présente sont édités sans précisions. En outre, il considère que les deux souscriptions du f. 393<sup>v</sup> ne font qu'une, en dépit du fait que les mains qui les ont écrites sont clairement différentes, et il publie les vers contenus au f. 394<sup>v</sup> comme s'il s'agissait d'un seul poème, divisé peut-être en deux parties, l'une sur Ptolémée et l'autre sur l'empereur Romain. Enfin, de Boor commente brièvement la deuxième composition en indiquant que le Romain dont il est question devait être Romain IV Diogène.

Les informations fournies par de Boor furent reprises par la suite. C'est ainsi qu'en publiant l'épigramme de Théodore Prodrome pour la mort d'un Léon Tzikandèles,<sup>7</sup> Wolfram Hörandner pensa qu'il s'agissait du personnage qui dans l'édition de de Boor apparaît comme l'auteur de la souscription datée de 1124. Cette identification fut reprise par K. Barzos dans son étude sur la généalogie des Comnènes.<sup>8</sup> Quelques années plus tard, en étudiant la tradition manuscrite des Continuateurs de Georges le Moine, Alexandra Sotiroudis se pencha<sup>9</sup> sur notre document et sur les vers qui nous préoccupent : elle précisa bien qu'il s'agissait de trois poésies. Elle corrigea certaines lectures erronées de de Boor et proposa d'autres interventions sur le texte. Cependant le sens de l'ensemble demeure non étudié : c'est exactement ce à quoi je vais essayer de remédier ici.

### Les souscriptions : qui est Léon ?

Commençons par la question des souscriptions. Laissons de côté la première, qui est la copie de la souscription de Léon Grammatikos, auteur du premier manuscrit : elle a été recopiée telle quelle par celui qui, au XI<sup>ème</sup> siècle, a confectionné la version actuelle du manuscrit. La deuxième souscription a été ajoutée par un lecteur qui en était probablement aussi le propriétaire, Léon Tzikandèles :

Λέων πρόεδρος καὶ δοῦξ τῶν Κιβυρραιωτῶν ὁ Τζικανδ(ή)λ(ης) καὶ οἰκείος  
ἄν(θρωπ)ος τοῦ κραται(οῦ) καὶ ἀ(γίου) ἡμῶν βασιλέως.<sup>10</sup>

Malheureusement ce Léon ne nous donne aucune indication chronologique. Au vu de sa place dans la page, nous pouvons cependant penser que sa souscription est

<sup>6</sup> Theophanes Confessor, *Chronographia*, éd. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1885), vol. 2, pp. 378–379.

<sup>7</sup> Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte*, éd. W. Hörandner (Vienne, 1973), n° LXV, pp. 101–102.

<sup>8</sup> Konstantinos Barzos, *Η γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν* (Thessalonique, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 663–664.

<sup>9</sup> Alexandra Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des „Georgius Continuatus“ (Redaktion A)* (Thessalonique, 1989).

<sup>10</sup> Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung*, p. 29, transcrit à tort Κιβυρρηιωτῶν, tandis que le mot ἀγίου dans le manuscrit est limité à un ἀ, tout le reste étant dans l'abréviation.

plus ancienne que celle qui la suit, d'autant plus qu'en deux endroits, nous constatons clairement que les lettres écrites par l'auteur de la deuxième souscription chevauchent celles tracées par Léon.

La souscription suivante est due à un autre personnage qui hélas, ne nous dit pas son nom. Comme l'a bien noté A. Sotiroudis, cette souscription prétend être métrique. En voici la transcription:

† Δέσποινα(α) ἀγνή μ(ήτη)ρ τοῦ φιλαν(θρώπου),  
 ἡ τῶν οὐ(ρα)νῶν ὑψηλοτ(έ)ρ(α) μόνη,  
 ἐν τῇ φοβεράῃ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ υἱοῦ σου  
 προστίθῃ καὶ ῥῦσαι μαι πυρὸς ἀσβεστοῦ,  
 σὸν ἱκέτην, ἄχραντε Παρθενομήτ(ο)ρ,  
 καλὸν μάγιστρον Τουρμαρχόπωλ(ον) ἀμήν.  
 \*Εγραψα ταῦτ(α) μηνὶ Φ(ε)βρ(ουαρίῳ) ἰ(νδι)κ(τίονι) πρ(ώτῃ) ἔτους, ςχλβ' ἐπὶ βασιλείᾳ  
 Ἰω(άννου) τοῦ Πορφυρογεννήτου.

*Note:* v. 4 προστίθῃ καὶ ῥῦσαι μαι πυρὸς ἀσβεστοῦ] à lire: προστίθει καὶ ῥῦσαι με πυρὸς ἀσβέστου (comme écrit justement Sotiroudis) προστίθῃ καὶ ῥῦσεμαι de Boor; v. 6 καλὸν – Τουρμαρχόπωλ(ον) / ἀμήν] Sotiroudis ajoute un καὶ (qui n'existe pas dans le manuscrit) avant Τουρμαρχόπωλ(ον), considère le vers καλὸν μάγιστρον καὶ Τουρμαρχόπωλ(ον) manquant d'une syllabe, et lie le mot ἀμήν à la date. Souscription: ἰ(νδι)κ(τίονι) πρ(ώτῃ) est absent dans les éditions de de Boor et de Sotiroudis.

Il s'agit, comme on le voit bien, d'une prière à la Vierge, à la fin de laquelle ce pieux lecteur indique la date, 'février 6632' (à savoir 1124) et probablement l'indiction (ἰ(νδι)κ(τίονι) πρ(ώτῃ)).<sup>11</sup> Or, comme cette prière ne contient pas le nom de son auteur, qui se définit tout simplement 'μάγιστρος', de Boor a cru que la première souscription, celle de Léon, et la deuxième, anonyme, ne faisaient qu'une, en dépit du fait que les deux écritures sont assez différentes<sup>12</sup> et que chaque souscription est précédée d'une croix. Cette erreur

<sup>11</sup> Cette indication, plutôt difficile à lire, n'est mentionnée ni par de Boor, Theophanes, *Chronographia*, p. 379, ni par Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung*, p. 29, qui se limitent à préciser l'année et le mois. Cependant en 1124 l'indiction était la deuxième: l'auteur s'est-il trompé?

<sup>12</sup> Les écritures des deux annotations qui occupent la partie inférieure du f. 393<sup>v</sup> du *Paris. gr.* 1711, tout en étant structurellement et chronologiquement proches (fin XIe s.–premières décennies XIIe s.) sont dues à deux mains distinctes. À celle qui a écrit la première annotation remontent aussi sans aucun doute les versets du f. 394<sup>r</sup>. Les différences entre les deux annotations concernent à la fois des facteurs conjoncturels (couleur des encres, épaisseur des outils d'écriture, dimensions moyennes des lettres) et des éléments structurels, tels que la construction et la forme de plusieurs lettres ainsi que de certaines liaisons. Pour nous limiter à quelques exemples, à la différence de la seconde annotation, la première présente les derniers traits du kappa et du lambda toujours sinueux; en outre, quand il n'est pas lié à la lettre suivante, le rho est très petit, son trait descendant ne franchissant pas la ligne de base, à la différence de la seconde annotation; le trait vertical du phi majuscule ne se développe que vers le haut dans la première écriture, aussi vers le

dans l'édition de de Boor a entraîné une série de malentendus car, selon celle-ci, Léon aurait été *doux* des Cibyrrhéotes en 1124: cette datation aurait pu faire de lui le père de Basile Tzikandélès Goudélès, personnage assez connu et célébré dans certains poèmes du recueil de poésies du manuscrit *Marcianus gr.* 524, époux d'Eudoxie Aggéliné Comnène, petite-fille d'Alexis I<sup>er</sup> Comnène. Ce Basile s'était marié autour de 1149–1150.<sup>13</sup> Selon cette logique, notre Léon Tzikandélès serait le même personnage que celui pour lequel Théodore Prodrome, né autour de 1115, avait composé une épitaphe:<sup>14</sup> Théodore nous dit que Léon était stratège et qu'il avait épousé une Anne Comnène. La même identification a été suivie par Sotiroudis.<sup>15</sup>

Or, toutes ces reconstructions paraissent très peu plausibles si nous pensons que Léon était *doux* et proèdre avant 1124. Le seul élément que nous pouvons retenir en ce sens est que la famille de Léon avait des liens très forts avec les Comnènes, depuis Alexis I<sup>er</sup>.<sup>16</sup> Quant à moi, pour des raisons que je développerai plus loin, je suis plutôt de l'avis que ce Léon Tzikandélès devait appartenir à la génération précédant celle du Léon, père de Basile, qu'il était plutôt un contemporain de Nicéphore Botaniatès et d'Alexis Comnène, et que l'inscription date des années 1080–1100.

De toute manière, la date 1124 ne représente qu'un *terminus ante quem*, et non *post quem* ou *ad quem* pour la composition des vers du f. 394<sup>v</sup>, contrairement à ce qu'on a toujours pensé. Entrons brièvement dans le détail de cette souscription dont deux expressions attirent notre attention. Léon, qui est proèdre et *doux* des Cibyrrhéotes, appartient donc à *l'establishment* et aux circuits du pouvoir en place et se définit οἰκεῖος ἀνθρωπος τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως. Malheureusement le texte ne nous dit pas de quel empereur il s'agit et les mots οἰκεῖος ἀνθρωπος et κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως étaient déjà usités avant le XII<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Par ailleurs, la définition de l'empereur 'saint' et 'puissant' appartient aussi au langage choisi par Alexis I<sup>er</sup> Comnène, et la définition de οἰκεῖος ἀνθρωπος est parfaitement en phase avec la politique sociétaire et les liaisons de clientèle mises en place par Alexis.

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bas dans la seconde (la forme minuscule 'à clés de sol' est très rare dans la première main, fréquente dans l'autre). Il faut aussi remarquer les différences dans la fréquence, la forme et les dimensions des signes d'abréviation, ainsi que des esprits et des accents.

<sup>13</sup> Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία*, pp. 663–664.

<sup>14</sup> Voir n. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung*, p. 29: 'Leon Tzikandele ist ohne Zweifel derselbe Leon, auf dessen Tod Theodoros Prodromos ein Gedicht Verfasste'.

<sup>16</sup> La famille des Tzikandélès est bien connue: voir Erich Trapp, 'Die Etymologie des Names Tzikandele', *JÖB*, 22 (1973): p. 233, et Demetrios Polemis, *The Dukai. A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (Londres, 1968), pp. 186–187. Voir aussi les références dans Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung*, pp. 29–30.

## Les Poésies

La question de la souscription et de sa datation revêt un intérêt majeur pour nous, car notre Léon Tzikandélès, auteur de la première souscription et probable propriétaire du manuscrit, est aussi celui qui a transcrit dix-sept vers au verso de la feuille 394, dont le recto est blanc: ces vers n'ont pas été composés directement dans le manuscrit, mais recopiés à partir d'un autre manuscrit ou de quelques feuilles. De Boor, qui avait édité le texte, a commis une erreur en présentant ces vers comme faisant partie d'un seul poème (éventuellement divisé en deux parties), erreur corrigée par Sotiroudis. En effet, les trois premiers vers sont précédés d'une croix, tout comme les huit qui suivent, tandis que les six derniers sont précédés et suivis de cette même croix (Fig. 13.2). Il s'agit donc bel et bien de trois poésies distinctes, d'autant plus que la deuxième présente un achrostique alphabétique (AAA-BBB-ΓΓ).

### Première Épigramme

Voyons à présent le contenu des épigrammes. Dans la première, l'auteur nous commente la figure d'un Ptolémée sous la forme d'une épigramme funéraire, avec son adresse à un étranger, comme s'il s'agissait d'une composition inscrite sur le tombeau du roi.

† Οὗτος βασιλεὺς ὁ Πτολεμαῖος, ξένε,  
ὃς εἶχεν ὥσὶ τάσδε προσκαθημέναις  
ἄγνοϊαν ἀπάτην τε, διττὴν κακίαν.

*Celui-ci, ô étranger, est le roi Ptolémée,  
qui avait toujours près de son oreille ces métayers,  
la naïveté et la tromperie, un mal double.*

En ce qui concerne l'édition du texte, au v. 2 la correction de Sotiroudis ὥσεῖ au lieu de ὥσὶ (comme écrit dans le manuscrit) n'est pas nécessaire: je pense qu'il s'agit des mauvais conseillers 'assis près de ses oreilles'. Le besoin d'intervenir dans le texte est lié à la perception que nous avons de celui-ci: Sotiroudis intervient aussi à plusieurs reprises parce qu'elle fait parfois une lecture peu précise du manuscrit. De toute manière, ce qui importe à mon sens est l'utilisation du texte faite par Léon Tzikandélès, comme je l'expliquerai par la suite. C'est pourquoi je retiens la lecture du manuscrit.

Le mot προσκαθημέναις nous renvoie au langage juridique que l'auteur emploie pour désigner les métayers. Il veut dire que l'ignorance et la ruse siégeaient toujours près de l'oreille de Ptolémée. Le portrait est celui d'un roi (βασιλεὺς), à l'oreille duquel quelqu'un, qui est animé par le double fléau de l'ignorance et de la ruse, murmure des conseils néfastes. De quel roi s'agit-il? Il est difficile de dire auquel des nombreux Ptolémée l'auteur fait référence. Selon Müller,<sup>17</sup> il s'agirait de Ptolémée Lagide, à qui aurait pu (toujours d'après Müller) se rapporter l'ouvrage du Pseudo-Callisthène. Il imagine ainsi

<sup>17</sup> Müller, Arriani *Anabasis*, vol. 3, p. XXVII.

que cette poésie aurait pu être une sorte d'inscription apposée sur une page face à une autre – aujourd'hui arrachée – qui aurait contenu l'image de Ptolémée, et que cette image aurait justement précédé l'œuvre du Pseudo-Callisthène. Il s'agit là d'une jolie hypothèse, qui a peu de chances d'être juste.

Parmi les différents personnages qui portent le nom de Ptolémée, figure le Philopatôr qui avait mauvaise presse auprès des Byzantins et à propos duquel Constantin Porphyrogénète, dans sa collection *De virtutibus et vitiis*, reprend Polybe pour déclarer<sup>18</sup> qu'en raison de ses mœurs dissolues, il avait mal géré l'Etat, et qu'il s'était entouré de bien mauvais conseillers. Je voudrais sur ce point avancer une hypothèse un peu audacieuse et impossible à démontrer: si nous songeons au fait que le lecteur byzantin pratique une 'lecture intensive' (j'emprunte la définition à Guglielmo Cavallo<sup>19</sup>), et que l'auteur de l'épigramme peut avoir lu de façon intensive tout le manuscrit, il se peut aussi que cette petite composition, qui apparemment sert de commentaire ou scholie, ait servi à gloser la figure d'un autre Ptolémée, l'Epiphanès, qui avait régné 24 ans et dont les deux fils étaient en lutte pour la succession au pouvoir. Je pense à cela parce que l'histoire de Ptolémée Epiphanès avait également été rapportée par Georges le Syncelle, l'auteur dont l'ouvrage représente la première composition historique du manuscrit parisien 1711, ajoutée, comme nous l'avons vu, au XI<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Et je songe aussi au fait que la dernière histoire racontée juste avant la page qui contient l'épigramme, histoire qui fait partie de la *Chronique des souverains récents*, est celle de Romain Lécapène, qui avait justement régné 24 ans, avant d'être déposé par une conjuration de ses deux enfants, en lutte entre eux pour la succession sur le trône. Evidemment cette hypothèse demeure indémontrable, une simple conjecture fragile, justifiée par le fait que la poésie qui suit a pour sujet un autre Romain, ainsi que nous le verrons.

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'épigramme porte sur le rôle de ces conseillers malveillants qui agissent contre l'intérêt du roi. Si cette poésie était une scholie dans un manuscrit, curieusement Léon Tzikandèles n'aurait écrit ou transcrit que cette épigramme. Or, nous ignorons les raisons précises de son acte. Demeure le fait que cette épigramme était censée se référer directement à un texte, comme une scholie imaginée à la marge: c'est la seule explication de la présence du pronom οὗτος qui se trouve au début de la composition. Léon a donc trouvé ou composé ce *marginale*, pour l'insérer dans une page vide du manuscrit qu'il avait entre les mains.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *Excerpta de virtutibus et vitiis*, éd. A.G. Roos (Berlin, 1910), vol. 2, p. 101, n° 17.

<sup>19</sup> Guglielmo Cavallo, *Lire à Byzance* (Paris, 2006), *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> Il faut signaler que la *Chronique* de Georges le Syncelle dans le manuscrit parisien est accompagnée de très nombreuses scholies à la marge, et que plusieurs d'entre elles, qui se réfèrent à un personnage cité dans le texte, sont précédées par le mot οὗτος. Je n'ai pas repéré de la poésie parmi elles, mais une édition de ces scholies serait la bienvenue.



## Deuxième Épigramme

Le texte qui vient ensuite a pour sujet un autre empereur, dont on déplore le fait que ses ennemis lui aient fait perdre tout d'abord la vue, puis la vie. L'auteur évoque un roi, qui a accompli des expéditions militaires, dont la dernière a très mal tourné, et il en plaint le sort: les ennemis maintenant ricanent sans fin.

† Ἀναξ Ῥωμανὲ τῆς ὅλης οἰκουμένης,  
ἀπῆλθες, ἐστράτευσας, ὥπλισω πάλιν.  
Ἄλλ' ἀντανῆλθεν ἡ στρατεύσεις εἰς φόνους.  
Βουλῇ πονηρᾷ τῶν κρατῶντων Αὐσόνων  
βέβηλος ὥσπερ ἐστερήθης ὁμμάτων,  
βίου τε τὴν στέρησιν ὑπέστης ἀναξ.  
Γέλῳσι νῦν ἅπαντες ἐχθροὶ συντόμως  
γέλῳτα θερμὸν οὐχ ὄρον κεκτημένον.

*Romain, seigneur de toute la terre,  
tu es parti, tu as mené la guerre, arme-toi encore une fois.  
Mais la campagne s'est transformée en meurtres.  
A cause de la malveillance des puissants Ausones  
tu as été privé des yeux, comme un impie,  
et tu as dû souffrir de la privation de la vie, seigneur.  
Maintenant tous les ennemis rient d'un coup,  
et leur ris est gras, n'a pas de limites.*

Du point de vue du texte, il faut signaler la fausse lecture τῶν κρατῶντων ἀνθρώπων (v. 4) au lieu de τῶν κρατῶντων Αὐσόνων, présente à la fois dans le texte de de Boor, dans celui de Müller et dans celui de Sotiroudis. En outre, Sotiroudis corrige κρατῶντων en κρατούντων: j'ai gardé la lecture du manuscrit, κρατῶντων, car je pense qu'il s'agit d'une forme possible: Dukas, dans son *Historia Turcobyzantina* (éd. V. Grecu, 32. 4. 14 et 36. 4. 6) utilise la forme κρατῶντες. Toujours Sotiroudis lit à tort (v. 1) dans le manuscrit ὦ ἀναξ, tandis que Müller écrit ὦ νᾶξ (sic). A la ligne 2, le manuscrit écrit ὀπλίσω, que Sotiroudis corrige en ὥπλισω, tout comme Müller: les deux lectures ὥπλισο et ὥπλίσω sont possibles, même si elles donnent un sens différent ; avec le verbe à l'aoriste nous comprenons que l'auteur fait référence aux campagnes militaires de Romain, tandis qu'avec le verbe à l'impératif nous lisons la phrase comme une impossible invitation ; j'ai gardé la deuxième, corrigeant le texte du manuscrit, car dans celui-ci l'accent se trouve clairement au-dessus du ι. A la ligne 7 la lecture συντόμως a été corrigée par Sotiroudis en συντόνω; cela a en effet davantage de sens ('tous les ennemis ensemble'), mais je crois qu'il faut retenir le texte tel qu'il est dans le manuscrit car à mon avis, il s'agit plus d'un remplissage du vers que d'une connotation historique précise. Enfin, à la dernière ligne Müller écrit γέλῳτ' ἄθεσμον au lieu de γέλῳτα θερμὸν (qu'il lit γέλῳτα θεσμόν). En ce qui concerne la ponctuation, Sotiroudis a suivi de Boor et Müller, tandis que je découpe différemment les phrases, ainsi que je l'expliquerai plus loin.

A la différence du poème qui précède, nous sommes en capacité de comprendre de qui l'auteur parle: des quatre empereurs qui ont pour nom Romain, seul le dernier a connu une destinée qui s'accorde avec ce que dit notre auteur. L'histoire est bien connue: élu empereur en 1068, après son mariage avec Eudoxie, la veuve de Constantin X, Romain IV Diogène avait mené de nombreuses expéditions militaires en Orient contre les Turcs Seldjoukides, avant d'être capturé en 1071 par leur chef, Alp Arslan, lors de la déroute de Manzikert. Libéré par ses ennemis, il avait rejoint la capitale, où – malgré les promesses reçues – on lui avait crevé les yeux et on l'avait exilé sur l'île de Prôti qui était un lieu de réclusion, où il mourut quelques jours plus tard, peut-être empoisonné, et où avant lui, avait également été enfermé Romain I<sup>er</sup>. Son beau-fils, Michel VII Doukas, prit alors le pouvoir. Au malheureux empereur déposé, Michel Psellos adressa une lettre disant que le fait d'être désormais aveugle était pour lui une chance: il pourrait ainsi se concentrer davantage sur son âme (Sathas lettre 82).

Si le sens général du poème est clair, certains points méritent quelques précisions. Au v. 4, dans l'édition de de Boor et de Sotiroudis figure l'expression τῶν κρατῶντων ἀνθρώπων: elle aurait pu nous renvoyer aux Turcs, qui avaient retenu l'empereur prisonnier, ou plutôt aux 'hommes de pouvoir' qui avaient causé sa perte. Cependant, après une lecture plus attentive du manuscrit, on voit bien que le texte dit 'τῶν κρατῶντων Αὐσόνων', que nous pourrions traduire un peu librement par 'les puissants Latins', ou 'Romains'. A qui l'auteur fait-il allusion? Pour mieux le comprendre, il nous faut souligner un petit détail: les éditeurs précédents mettent un point après τῶν κρατῶντων ἀνθρώπων (à lire désormais Αὐσόνων) et non pas après le troisième vers, alors que rien dans le manuscrit n'indique où la ponctuation doit être placée. Si l'on maintient le point après Αὐσόνων, la phrase signifie que le désastre militaire a été provoqué par une décision perverse des notables 'latins': on est en droit de penser alors à une allusion au fait que la déroute de Manzikert avait été causée par la désertion des troupes de Roussel de Bailleul, mercenaire occidental, et d'Andronic Doukas, l'un des fils du César Jean, qui avait joué un rôle majeur dans ce triste épisode. Ce seraient ces troupes les 'Ausones', les 'Romains', qui auraient causé la perte de Romain IV et transformé l'expédition militaire en hécatombe.

Je pense toutefois qu'il est préférable de découper différemment le texte et d'insérer le point après φόνους, qui est d'ailleurs le dernier mot des trois vers commençant par A (les trois vers suivants commencent par B, et les deux derniers par Γ). La phrase prend alors une tout autre tournure et colle davantage au déroulement historique de l'affaire. Dans ce cas, la critique est adressée à ceux qui sont au pouvoir, les κρατῶντες Αὐσονες, qui de par leur βουλῇ πονηρᾷ, mauvaise foi, l'ont privé de la vue et de la vie. A cause de cela, les ennemis se moquent de Byzance. La différence est de taille. Or, pendant l'époque des Comnènes le mot Αὐσονες désigne les empereurs. Mais le mot était usité déjà avant l'accès au trône d'Alexis I<sup>er</sup> Comnène: dans son *Histoire*, Michel Attaliatès, qui écrit une dizaine d'années après le désastre de Manzikert, utilise deux fois ce mot pour désigner les Byzantins.<sup>21</sup> Plus révélateur encore est le témoignage de Michel Psellos qui, dans ses poèmes, célèbre Isaac, le premier Comnène (1057-1059): le poète

<sup>21</sup> Michael Attaliates, *Historia*, éd. W. de Presle, (Bonn, 1853), p. 31, 12 et p. 214, 215.



le définit de τὸ κράτος τῶν Αὐσόνων,<sup>22</sup> ce qui n'est pas sans rappeler l'expression τῶν κρατῶντων Αὐσόνων. Par ces mots, l'auteur ferait donc référence à l'empereur Michel VII en personne et à ses conseillers (dont le même Psellos), qui par 'trahison' auraient provoqué la chute de l'empereur légitime. Lue de cette manière, la petite poésie devient un grand acte d'accusation contre le pouvoir, contre la dynastie des Doukas et contre ceux qui gèrent l'Etat. Rappelons enfin que la situation politique ne fut normalisée qu'une décennie après Manzikert, avec l'accession au trône d'Alexis I<sup>er</sup> Comnène.

Enfin, les deux derniers vers indiquent que la situation de l'Empire était dramatique, étant donné que tous ses ennemis le raillaient, ce qui nous renvoie à l'actualité et semble indiquer que la poésie suit chronologiquement de peu ces événements tragiques. Même si le langage est traditionnel, un fort décalage chronologique entre l'assassinat de Romain et la composition du poème semble très improbable: Léon, qui écrit ou transcrit le poème et qui se définit 'fidèle serviteur de l'empereur', critique le pouvoir en place, ce qui nous ferait penser à une période pendant laquelle les effets négatifs de la déroute de Manzikert se faisaient encore sentir. Il faudrait alors penser que Léon, lorsqu'il est au service d'un empereur qu'il respecte et dont il se définit 'fidèle serviteur' (comme il le dit dans sa souscription), a copié une poésie qui avait été rédigée quelque temps auparavant, lorsque sur le trône siégeait un empereur méchant, dont la 'mauvaise foi' avait causé la perte de Romain IV et le malheur de l'Empire que ses ennemis ne respectaient plus.

### *Troisième Épigramme*

Abordons maintenant la troisième poésie qui présente, elle aussi, une croix à son début, ce qui, sans aucun doute, est la marque d'une composition indépendante des deux autres. L'auteur commence par une déclaration à caractère sentencieux: celui qui n'est pas accoutumé à vivre dans le malheur a du mal à le supporter et à courber l'échine sous le joug. Mieux vaut mourir que vivre malheureux. Il ajoute ensuite qu'il a connu personnellement le malheur lorsqu'en un seul jour, tous ses biens lui furent retirés. Mais il affirme qu'il n'est plus dans cette situation.

† Ὅστις γὰρ οὐκ εἴωθεν γεύεσθαι κακῶν  
φέρει μέν, ἀλγεῖ δ' αὖχεν' ἐντιθείς ζυγῷ.  
Θανὼν δ' ἂν εἴην μάλλον εὐτυχέστερος  
ἢ ζῶν· τὸ γὰρ ζῆν μὴ καλῶς μέγας πόνος·  
κάγω γὰρ ἦν ποτ' ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτ' εἶμι,  
τὸν πάντα δ' ὄλβον ἤμαρ ἐν μ' ἀφείλετο. †

<sup>22</sup> W 20.4: Εἰς τὸν τάφον τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ τοῦ βασιλέως.

*Qui n'est pas accoutumé à goûter aux malheurs,  
supporte, il est vrai, mais souffre, le cou sous le joug:  
il serait probablement plus heureux s'il était mort, que  
s'il était en vie ; ne pas bien vivre est une grande douleur.  
Moi aussi j'étais jadis comme ça, mais maintenant je ne le suis plus:  
en un seul jour on m'a ôté toute richesse.*

Par rapport au texte édité par de Boor, deux corrections s'imposent: au premier vers le mot γενέσθαι doit être corrigé en γέυεσθαι comme il est clairement écrit dans le manuscrit, d'autant plus que l'expression γενέσθαι κακῶν n'a pas de sens; d'ailleurs la correction existe déjà dans l'édition Müller et dans l'édition Sotiroudis. Au dernier vers, la lecture de de Boor τὸ πάντα δ' ὄλων est erronée, car le manuscrit présente un τὸν πάντα δ' ὄλβον, comme écrivent justement Müller et Sotiroudis. Par contre Sotiroudis lit à tort dans le manuscrit ἀφέλλετο au lieu d' ἀφείλετο; en outre, elle indique avec des *cruces desperationis* la fin du vers 5, car la quantité des syllabes n'est pas respectée, ce qui gênait probablement un écrivain ancien, mais certainement pas un Byzantin; la source, l'*Hécube* d'Euripide, présente un οὐκ εἴμ' ἔτι au lieu de οὐκέτ' εἴμι; Müller présente le texte identique à celui d'Euripide, texte qu'il a vraisemblablement corrigé de son propre chef. Enfin Sotiroudis interprète le ν de φέρει μέν au v. 2 comme un οὐ qu'elle est contrainte de supprimer.

La donnée la plus intéressante de cette troisième poésie est qu'elle est totalement construite avec deux passages de l'*Hécube* d'Euripide: les quatre premiers vers correspondent à *Héc.* 375–378, les deux derniers à *Héc.* 284–285. Or, l'*Hécube* faisait partie des textes que tout étudiant byzantin devait avoir lus, et l'auteur le connaissait certainement bien. Mais dans ce cas, celui qui a réuni ces vers pour construire la petite composition, a inversé le sens de la dernière citation: dans la tragédie d'Euripide, Hécube pleure son bonheur passé, qu'elle a perdu en un seul jour. Ici le sens est contraire: transcrits après les quatre premiers, ces deux vers signifient que l'auteur vivait dans le malheur, puisqu'on lui avait ôté toute richesse en un seul jour, mais que désormais, il n'est plus dans cette situation.

Que veut dire le poète dans ce texte? Veut-il parler de lui-même et de ses malheurs dorénavant passés? Ou bien imagine-t-il que ces mots auraient pu être prononcés par le malheureux Romain IV? En d'autres termes, s'agit-il d'une réflexion personnelle ou d'une «éthopoïë», ce genre si cher aux Byzantins qui aimaient imaginer ce qu'un personnage célèbre ou mythique aurait pu dire dans une circonstance donnée? Le manque d'indication sur la paternité de ces poésies ne nous permet pas de le déterminer.

## L'Auteur

### *Une Hypothèse*

La question majeure à laquelle nous souhaiterions donner une réponse reste hélas en suspens: qui est l'auteur de l'assemblage de ces trois petites poésies et du remaniement de la troisième?<sup>23</sup> S'agit-il d'un seul auteur, de deux, voire de trois? Les éléments intérieurs ne nous permettent pas de donner une réponse définitive: les trois poésies sont trop brèves pour qu'une analyse stylistique puisse être menée.

Du point de vue technique, nous pouvons affirmer que celui ou ceux qui les ont écrites n'étaient pas très férus de métrique: le nombre des syllabes est respecté, mais cela n'est pas le cas de la quantité des syllabes, qui témoignent d'une certaine approximation dans la composition littéraire. Même la troisième pièce, composée en recopiant des passages d'Euripide, présente des incertitudes en ce qui concerne les règles métriques. Nous en tirons l'impression d'être en face non d'un poète de profession, mais plutôt d'un lecteur cultivé, qui s'amuse en faisant des commentaires poétiques.<sup>24</sup> Au vu des caractéristiques métriques, ni l'une ni l'autre composition doit être ancienne, même pas la première, tandis que la troisième, citation d'Euripide, a été mal recopiée au moment de sa reconstruction.

Léon Tzikandélès pourrait-il avoir joué au poète à ses moments perdus et être l'auteur de ces vers? Le seul indice en ce sens est l'actualité de la deuxième épigramme. N'oublions pas son contenu qui porte sur la disparition cruelle de Romain IV Diogène, dont on plaint le triste sort, car il a été tué par de cruels 'hommes de pouvoir'. Or, des commentaires de ce genre ajoutés au fait que, dans la troisième épigramme, l'auteur pourrait affirmer avoir connu une mauvaise passe et avoir retrouvé le bonheur, nous

<sup>23</sup> Je considère la troisième composition comme une poésie à part entière, même si elle est constituée de vers tirés d'Euripide.

<sup>24</sup> Pour préciser quelques détails à ce propos, nous pouvons observer que, si dans la troisième poésie la quantité des syllabes est respectée, sauf dans le 5<sup>ème</sup> vers, ce n'est pas toujours le cas dans la première ni dans la deuxième pièce. Ainsi, au-delà de I, 1 (Πτολεμαῖος) et III, 1 (Ῥωμανέ), qui sont des noms propres et qui tolèrent donc la transformation du pied iambique, dans la première poésie le v. 3 présente deux erreurs: les α de ἀπάτην et de κακίαν sont brèves, tandis qu'elles occupent la position d'une voyelle longue, de manière que le vers se présente ainsi:

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Dans la deuxième poésie, la quantité des syllabes est respectée, sauf au v. 6, où le mot ὑπέστης suppose que le υ soit long, ce qui n'est pas le cas. Si la troisième poésie ne présente pas de difficultés en ce qui concerne la quantité des syllabes, plus problématique est cependant son usage des césures. Le quatrième vers présente une césure pentémimère, le premier une césure heptémimère (semi-septénaire); le troisième et le sixième vers présentent les deux césures. Par contre, le deuxième et le cinquième vers présentent la césure entre deux mots (respectivement après le septième et le cinquième pied) séparés par une apostrophe. Comme il fallait s'y attendre, la loi de Porson n'est pas respectée (poésie 1, v. 3 et poésie 2, v. 4, 5 et 7). Enfin, la loi de Hilberg, selon laquelle la syllabe qui précède la césure heptémimère (semi-septénaire) ne doit pas porter d'accent, est respectée, selon l'usage byzantin.

font penser que celui qui a écrit ces vers était hostile à la politique de Michel VII et des Doukas, et qu'il avait été victime de ce régime. Il faudrait probablement rechercher cet auteur dans l'entourage de Nicéphore Botaniatès ou des Comnènes, qui ont toujours considéré avec compassion le sort du malheureux Romain, comme le prouvent l'*Alexiade* d'Anne Comnène, et même le *Timariôn*, produit littéraire de l'époque comnène avancée, où Romain IV est regardé avec sympathie et où on déplore son assassinat. Mais la réhabilitation de Romain IV avait déjà commencé sous Nicéphore III Botaniatès, qui monta sur le trône juste après Michel VII: Botaniatès est le héros de Michel Attaliatès, l'historien qui consacre à Romain IV une longue tirade rhétorique<sup>25</sup> pour commémorer le martyre de l'empereur, en s'en prenant à la cruauté du Doukas.<sup>26</sup>

Si comme je le crois, Léon Tzikandélès est l'auteur du second poème et celui qui a remanié le troisième, il pourrait avoir aussi rédigé le premier, ou bien ne l'avoir que recopié. Si c'est lui l'auteur de ces vers, il pourrait avoir écrit ces poésies entre le désastre de Manzikert qui précipita la mort de Romain (1071) et 1124, lorsqu'une autre main ajoute, après la souscription de Léon, une prière à la Vierge. Léon a dû atteindre le sommet de sa carrière avant 1124, lorsqu'une autre main a ajouté la deuxième souscription. Entre-temps, il est devenu proêtre et *doux* des Cibyrrhéotes et entretient d'excellents rapports avec l'empereur dont il se déclare servant fidèle. Cet empereur ne peut pas être Michel VII parce qu'il est le chef des 'méchants hommes de pouvoir' qui ont causé la perte de Romain et éventuellement les malheurs de l'auteur. Nous serait-il possible malgré tout de préciser peu ou prou la date de rédaction de ces vers? Le commentaire sur les ennemis de l'Empire qui, après la mort de Romain IV, se moquent des Byzantins et rient grassement, ne peut pas *a priori* nous éloigner trop de la décennie qui suit la mort du souverain martyr. Si Léon est l'auteur de ces vers, il doit les avoir écrits à l'époque de Nicéphore Botaniatès, ou au plus tard lorsqu'Alexis I<sup>er</sup> prit le pouvoir: c'est alors qu'il dut être nommé *doux* des Cibyrrhéotes. Le malheur est derrière lui et Léon peut laisser sa trace poétique dans le manuscrit.

Pour ce qui est de la première poésie, il pourrait l'avoir trouvée dans un manuscrit d'histoire, ou bien l'avoir fabriquée sur mesure. Mais cela n'est qu'une hypothèse et une conviction personnelle, car rien ne nous prouve de manière indubitable que Léon soit l'auteur que nous recherchons. Ce qui est certain est que cet auteur, qui assurément appréciait la littérature, et qui pratiquait une lecture intensive, n'était guère un auteur expérimenté, et son incursion dans le pré sacré des Muses fut occasionnelle.

<sup>25</sup> Attaliatès, *Historia*, p. 176, 7; p. 177, 16. Sur l'épisode de l'aveuglement de Romain chez Attaliatès, voir Vassilis Katsaros, 'Τὸ δραματικὸ στοιχείο στὰ ἱστορικὰ ἔργα τοῦ 11ου καὶ 12ου αἰῶνα', in Paolo Odorico, Panagiotis Agapitos et Martin Hinterberger (éds), *L'écriture de la mémoire. La littérature de l'historiographie, Actes du IIIe colloque international philologique EPMHNEIA* (Paris, 2006), pp. 281–316, notamment pp. 291–292.

<sup>26</sup> Le même Attaliatès enregistre (*Historia*, p. 167, 1) le nom d'un certain Léon, ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν δέησεων, qui s'était sauvé du désastre de Manzikert; selon Attaliatès, Léon était un homme de grande culture qui aimait les lettres. Le nom Léon étant très diffusé et aucun nom de famille n'apparaissant dans le récit d'Attaliatès, nous ne pouvons pas le lier à notre Tzikandélès, comme nous l'aurions souhaité.

*Une Nécessité?*

Si nous avions la certitude que la paternité de ces vers revient à Léon, si nous connaissions les détails de sa vie tourmentée, nous pourrions insérer ces épigrammes dans un contexte précis. Nous pourrions aussi nous réjouir du fait que nous serions alors en présence d'un autographe, ce qui à Byzance est rare. Mais cela signifierait qu'une fois de plus, nous nous soumettons davantage à nos structures mentales qu'à celles des Byzantins, ce qui constitue dans l'étude de ces écrits l'écueil ordinaire contre lequel je mettais en garde dès le début de mon propos. Ce qui compte le plus, et qui d'ailleurs est sûr, est que Léon (si c'était lui) a 'com-posé' sur la page, trois morceaux différents qui se réclamaient de la tradition poétique byzantine, et j'utilise ici le mot com-poser dans son sens étymologique, ou – pour le dire comme les Byzantins – συντάξαι, ce qui renvoie à la culture de la συλλογή, qui était largement pratiquée à Byzance.<sup>27</sup> Les trois poèmes présentent une remarquable unité. Que Léon en soit l'auteur ou qu'il les ait choisis, extraits et assemblés, il a construit son discours autour d'une idée, celle de cruels hommes de gouvernement et de méchants conseillers qui font du mal aux autres, et de la destinée des souverains. Dans la première pièce, on parle d'un roi ancien, qui prêtait son oreille à la médisance et à l'ignorance. Dans la deuxième, le roi est la victime des machinations des autres, des 'hommes de pouvoir' qui lui crèvent les yeux et lui ôtent la vie. Dans la troisième, en rassemblant des vers d'Euripide et en changeant leur contexte et leur signification, il est question des vicissitudes d'un homme qui a trouvé la détresse, mais qui s'en est sorti. A bien y regarder, l'ensemble, constitué de parties originales ou non, acquiert une autonomie, même s'il n'est question ni d'originalité ni d'innovation, pratiques que les Byzantins abhorraient. Le résultat est nouveau, il est aussi original, mais composé de parties recyclées: on fait du neuf avec du vieux tout en créant par des citations. Οὐδὲν ἐμοῦ ἐρῶ, disait Jean de Damas.

Il se peut que l'histoire d'un Ptolémée ait fait penser à celle de Romain I<sup>er</sup>, que la figure de celui-ci ait rappelé celle du malheureux Romain IV, que tout cela ait ranimé des souvenirs personnels, mais nous n'en aurons jamais la preuve et il ne s'agit pas ici d'ajouter de la poésie à la poésie: ce n'est pas le rôle du chercheur. Ce que nous pouvons affirmer est que Léon a transcrit sur une page un commentaire des heurs et malheurs d'un roi (qu'il ait fabriqué ou trouvé quelque part ce commentaire), qu'il l'a fait suivre d'un deuxième (qu'il en soit ou non l'auteur), qu'il en a probablement tiré des conclusions personnelles (en les sortant de ses lectures et en rassemblant deux citations). L'ensemble était peut-être destiné à une considération personnelle, à un exercice d'écriture, à remplir un après-midi vide, à un jeu solitaire, mais l'ensemble existe. Il est cohérent et passe inexorablement de l'enseignement que prodigue l'histoire, au récit du vécu, représenté ou non par ses propres mots, empruntés ou non aux autres.

Ce processus est connu, quoique peu étudié, et il est d'autant plus indicatif d'une mentalité qu'autour de réflexions de ce genre, le Byzantin pouvait construire de longs

<sup>27</sup> Je fais référence ici à mon étude: Paolo Odorico, 'La cultura della sylloge', *BZ*, 83 (1990): pp. 1–21; Paolo Odorico, 'Cadre d'exposition/cadre de pensée', in *Encyclopaedic Trends in Byzantium ? An International Conference*, Institute for Early Christian and Byzantine Studies, K.U. Leuven 6–8 May 2009 (sous presse).

ouvrages. Prenons l'exemple d'un auteur particulier de ce même XI<sup>ième</sup> siècle, qui montre, tout comme notre Léon, de l'intérêt pour l'histoire, pour l'écriture, pour les lettres: Cécauménos. Lui aussi écrit: il compose un long discours auquel on a donné à tort le titre de *Stratégikon*. A sa lecture, nous respirons très souvent un air de choses connues, de sentences morales, d'enseignements, que nous retrouvons dans plusieurs œuvres, sans jamais ou presque, pouvoir citer une source précise. Cécauménos se sert de son histoire personnelle pour en tirer des enseignements généraux. Il mêle l'expérience de ses aïeux à la sienne, il construit des observations fondées sur des exemples historiques, observations remplies de bon sens et difficilement réfutables, qui visent à donner de bons conseils.<sup>28</sup>

Voici un exemple pris au hasard: 'Si tu as un caractère tel que tu n'as pas besoin des conseils d'autrui, il faut que tu fasses tout, sans que les autres le sachent. Le commandant qui n'a pas besoin de l'opinion d'un autre, vaut une armée entière; tels étaient Pyrrhus d'Épire et Hannibal de Carthage: mais après des campagnes splendides une mauvaise destinée les a rattrapés; ce ne fut pas à cause de leurs erreurs, mais parce que Dieu l'a voulu ainsi ...'<sup>29</sup> L'histoire se mêle à la narration, le tout est lié à des observations personnelles, le but est une considération morale. Le 'je' prend une place importante, mais toujours cachée derrière les formes standardisées de la tradition.

Vus sous cet angle, ces vers nous livrent quantité d'informations précieuses sur le niveau de lecture, sur l'instruction des gens cultivés (mais non hommes de lettres), sur la fonction elle-même de la poésie qui devient un outil d'expression, avec tout son recours à la tradition et aux phrases figées. Il s'agit d'une poésie qui n'est pas destinée à un public, mais qui, tel un message dans une bouteille, est confiée à la page blanche d'un manuscrit, pour donner un témoignage et une morale. Poésie originale? Non. Innovatrice? Non plus. Expression personnelle? Certainement pas. Lieu d'expérimentation? Aucunement. Et malgré tout, poésie. Mais à la mode de Byzance.

<sup>28</sup> Sur ces aspects du *Stratégikon*, voir Charlotte Roueché, 'The Literary Background of Kekaumenos', in Catherine Holmes et Judith Waring (éds), *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond* (Leiden/Cologne, 2002), pp. 111–138; Paolo Odorico, 'Un esempio di lunga durata del sapere: Cecaumeno, Sinadinos, l'età moderna', in Maria-Serena Funghi (éd.), *Aspetti di letteratura gnomica nel mondo antico*, vol. 1 (Firenze, 2003), pp. 283–299.

<sup>29</sup> Pour le texte de Cécauménos: Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, éd. M.D. Spadaro, *Cecaumeno: Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo* (Alessandria, 1998), pp. 42–43, pp. 78–80.

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